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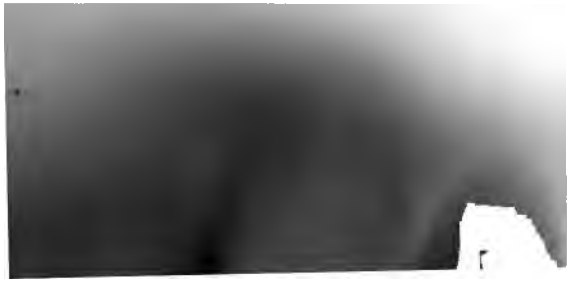

# WILLIAM WETMORE STORY

## AND HIS FRIENDS

Yours faithfully
W. W. Story

# WILLIAM WETMORE STORY

AND

# HIS FRIENDS

FROM LETTERS, DIARIES, AND RECOLLECTIONS

BY

HENRY JAMES

IN TWO VOLUMES

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# EARLY YEARS AND EARLY WORK

# WILLIAM WETMORE STORY AND HIS FRIENDS.

## I.

### THE PRECURSORS.

It may appear a new application of the truth that honour, where honour, as to any frank advance, attaches, is especially due to the light skirmishers, the *éclaireurs*, who have gone before; yet there are occasions on which it comes home to us that, so far as we are contentedly cosmopolite to-day and move about in a world that has been made for us both larger and more amusing, we owe much of our extension and diversion to those comparatively few who, amid difficulties and dangers, set the example and made out the road. This is the lesson offered us, on occasion, as we turn over old records,

spared by time and mischance, old letters, notes, diaries, faded pages often, even when patched with pages of print scarcely less faded, but testifying in their manner to the element of adventure once at play in relations and situations that we late-comers take all placidly for granted. I allude in this connection, I need hardly say, not to the great explorers and discoverers who have taken us to the Equator or the Poles, those who have bequeathed us the round globe to hang up in our drawing-rooms for ornament — as merely the largest of the silvered orbs in which we see, wherever the eye rests, the reflection of our own movement. I am conscious rather of the suggestions of a particular case, the case so common at this end of time, but common precisely because certain patient persons long ago were so good as to bear a certain brunt. Europe, for Americans, has, in a word, been *made* easy; it was anything but easy, however much it was inspiring, during that period of touching experiment, experiment often awkward almost to drollery too, in which the imagination of the present introducer must thus betray at the outset an inclination to lose itself. When we make such reflections as I here venture to throw out, it is as Americans, obviously, that we read most meaning into them—meaning of many sorts,

the pursuit of which I confess myself perhaps almost extravagantly disposed, for reasons of my own, to cultivate. Great may the disposition thus become to remember the precursors; though doubtless it would take me far to make my own case clear and to set forth all the grounds of my tenderness. I should need more time than I am at liberty to ask for, and I must leave my general claim—this claim for tenderness—to bear fruit where it can. Many memories abide in it—with the shyest glance at which I must content myself. What is definite is the upshot of the matter, which may almost be described as a pious habit, the habit of friendly, kindly, often decidedly envious evocation. It becomes inveterate as the years add to the distance; it attaches itself to the vision, to the conception of the old order (into which we too are now so rapidly falling) as entertained by earlier pilgrims and more candid victims—attaches itself the more, no doubt, because of the sorrowful sense that the picture of our primitive phase has really never been painted.

The old relation, social, personal, æsthetic, of the American world to the European—a relation expressed practically, at the time, of course, in such active experiments as might be — is as charming a subject as the student of manners,

morals, personal adventures, the history of taste, the development of a society, need wish to take up, with the one drawback, in truth, of being treatable but in too many lights. The poet, the dramatist, the critic, would alike, on consideration, find it to bristle with appeals and admonitions. It has, in short, never been "done," to call done, from any point of view— I am moved, at all events, to risk the assertion. The pure and precious time — the time of the early flowering — was the matter of a moment and lasted but while it could; in consequence of which who can say when it began or ended? The further back we place the beginning of it the better, assuredly, in the interest of our romantic vision, though indeed we may meet thus, it must be added, the principal lion in our path. The dawn of the American consciousness of the complicated world it was so persistently to annex is the more touching the more primitive we make that consciousness; but we must recognise that the latter can scarcely be interesting to us in proportion as we make it purely primitive. The interest is in its becoming perceptive and responsive, and the charming, the amusing, the pathetic, the romantic drama is exactly that process. The process, in our view, must have begun, in order to determine the psychological

moment, but there is a fine bewilderment it must have kept in order not to anticipate the age of satiety. The reader of old records — I speak of the private sort—the reader surrounded by satiety has to decide for himself, on the evidence and so far as it may be his humour to piece the past together, just when and where extreme freshness, looking out on life, ceases to repeat itself. How soon *could* it begin, perceptibly, to taste; how long could it, on the other hand, continue to taste with intensity? Such are the questions that the "case," as I call it, fondly considered, disposes us to ask—quite as if we were to make some beautiful use of them. I see for them at present, however, a use of necessity limited and conditioned. Not that I think it perforce the less happy for that. A boxful of old papers, personal records and relics all, has been placed in my hands, and in default of projecting more or less poetically such an experience as I have glanced at—the American initiation in a comparative historic twilight—I avail myself of an existing instance and gladly make the most of it.

Its most general effect for me has been, I repeat, to renew my loyalty to the company of those—some of them here buried—without whose initiation we settled partakers of the greater ex-

tension should still be waiting for our own. We must of course not overdo it, but as they got theirs, often, in ways that were hard, I like to miss, in order to do them justice, not a step in the general story; all the more, naturally, too, that our contention is precisely that their satisfactions—could they only have known it—were to have been the finer and the more numerous. They came from a world that was changing, but they came to one likewise not immutable, not quite fixed, for their amusement, as under a glass case; and it would have quickened their thrill to be a little more aware than they seem generally to have been that some possible sensations were slipping away for ever, that they were no more than just in time for the best parts of the feast, and that a later and less lucky generation might have as many regrets as surprises. The hungrier among them thought perhaps sometimes of what even they might make out that they had missed; but this latter amount, for the first sixty years of the century, remained the extremely minor quantity. What we ourselves see is both what they still found and what they paid for it. And true at large of the American pilgrim of that unadministered age, these things are especially true of those who crossed the Atlantic to follow one or the other of those mysteries, arts, sciences, of

which at present—so far as the teaching of them and the dealing in them has become a prosperous traffic — we are perhaps, as a nation, the main supporters. I think of them all, the artless seekers of knowledge, would-be haunters of the fountainhead; but I think of the artist-fraternity in especial, the young Americans aspiring to paint, to build and to carve, and gasping at home for vital air, whose fortunes it is mostly impossible to follow, in particular cases, without the disposition to handle them gently. It is to them and the price *they* paid that we pillars of *ateliers*, winners of medals, favourites of "juries," ornaments of Salons, are above all indebted. We have left the formal discipline of Dusseldorf and Antwerp and Munich, we have left even that of Venice and Florence and Rome, far behind; but it is all because they showed us the way, through having had first to find it, with much more or less comic and tragic going and coming, for themselves. As we turn over the stray, pale testimonies out of which we pick up their history, their simplicities become sacred to us and their very mistakes acquire a charm. These mistakes are sometimes, verily, great enough to make us wonder what sensibility—the quality we assume in them —could flicker in such darkness; then again we

see that their good faith was what supported them through the tribulations from which we are exempt, and their good faith thus becomes for us the constant key to their pleasure, or at least to their endurance. We admire and enjoy things they admired and enjoyed, but they did this with things for which it is now impossible to us. Robert Browning and his illustrious wife burnt incense, for instance, to Domenichino. Our happy—much more happy, after all, than unhappy—predecessors almost to a man did this; and the essence of my case is that I like them for it, and that the case itself, as I put it, is that of the period, of the conditions, in which such "quaintness" was inevitable.

There came a moment when the spell in question began to weaken, and in that subtle revolution our subject, could we fully give ourselves to it, would find its dramatic climax. Its limit is marked, in our own direction, its modern side, by two or three such pregnant transitions. They accord with many other things that represent the inevitable quickening of the pace. I think of the American who started on his *Wanderjahre* after the Civil War quite as one of the moderns divided by a chasm from his progenitors and elder brothers, carried on the wave as they were not, and all supplied with introductions,

photographs, travellers' tales and other aids to knowingness. He has been, this child of enlightenment, very well in his way; but his way has not, on many sides, been equally well, save as we think of it all as the way of railroads and hotels. Yet even from this point of view also the advantage was half with the precursor. The celestial cheapness of the early times made up for many a *train de luxe* and many an electric-bell. The old letters are full of it—it made even *them*, the old wanderers, marvel; it was in particular the last cloying sweet in the rich feast of Italy; it could add a grace even to the grace of Florence, and a thrill even to the thrill of Rome. America then, certainly, had her cheapness too, but Florence and Rome were a refinement even on that refinement. No wonder, in short, the Brownings admired Domenichino when they had to pay so little for it. We find some of the figures in Mrs Browning's beautiful Letters, and they are doubtless, in general, for much in the charm of our evocation. It is partly in the light of them, so to speak, that we repeople the States of the Church—how I remember the crooked, coloured spots so stamped in my school-atlas!—the Tuscany of the old paternal Grand Duke, and even the dreadful Naples of the Bourbons, with the blessed generation that crawled

by *vettura*, taking oxen for a spurt, that had its letter-postage (when it got its letters) charged twice and its newspapers mostly confiscated, but that, enjoying the "margin" we have lost forever, enjoyed thereby the time to make its discoveries and to know what it felt. All the discoveries now are made, and, with this, most of the feelings, the sweetest and strangest, have dropped. We know everything in relation to the objects that used to excite them—everything but that we do feel. We are in doubt of that—everything has been so felt *for* us.

If the interesting boxful that I speak of as in my hands forms practically a record of the many Italian years of William Wetmore Story, sculptor and man of letters, so let me yet immediately make the point that, though I have been moved to the foregoing remarks by the consideration of the rather markedly typical case associated with his name, I am at the same time well aware that it is typical with many qualifications. He lived on, worked on into what we may call the new day, and he had doubtless not originally been, as an American pilgrim, superlatively primitive. There is a charming, touching anecdote of his distinguished father, Mr Justice Story, which tells us that, though he had never crossed the sea, he excited the surprise of an English trav-

eller, one evening at Cambridge, Massachusetts, by being able promptly to "place" some small street in London, of which the name had come up in talk, but of which the traveller was ignorant. Judge Story, in other words, knew his London because, even at that then prodigious distance from it, he had a feeling for it. His son was to start from a home in which such things had been possible, but he started, nevertheless, in time not to miss the old order. He died in 1895, but his Italian span happily had been long. It is part of the interest of his career for us—or, as I cannot help again putting it, of his case—that he saw the change, felt it and, in a manner, both helped it and suffered for it, that his pleasant, eminent, happy, yet not *all* happy, history remarkably testified to it. Story had above all, among his many gifts, the right sensibility, given his New England origin; the latter had left him plenty to learn, to taste, to feel and assimilate, but it had not formed him, fortunately, without a universal curiosity, a large appetite for life or a talent that yearned for exercise. Nothing, indeed, seems to me to have been more marked for envy than the particular shade of preparation — about which there will be presently more to say — involved in his natural conditions. I lose myself, once more, as I turn them over, in the view of so

happy, so ideal an opportunity for freshness. The best elements of the New England race, of its old life and its old attitude, had produced and nourished him, and it is quite, for our imagination, as if he had thus been engendered and constituted to the particular end of happily reacting from them. There are reactions that are charming, adequate, finely expressive; there are others that are excessive, extravagant, treacherous. Story's was not of the violent sort, of the sort that makes a lurid picture for biography or drama; but it was conscious and intelligent, arriving at the pleasure and escaping the pain, a revolution without a betrayal.

So it is that generally, at all events, he fits into our category, and that he represents there, moreover, the appeal, the ghostly claim as we may almost call it, of a dislodged, a vanished society. Figures innumerable, if we like to recall them, and if, alas! we *can*, pass before us in the vividness of his company and meet us in the turns and twists—or perhaps I should say in the rather remarkably straight avenue—of his fortune. Boxfuls of old letters and relics are, in fine, boxfuls of ghosts and echoes, a swarm of apparitions and reverberations as dense as any set free by the lifted lid of Pandora. The interest is exquisite—when it is not intolerable—though doubtless an

interest always, and even at the best, more easy to feel than to communicate. It is a matter of our own memory, our own fancy, to say nothing of our own heredity; I take it indeed for an entertainment particularly subjective. It is everything for those who have known, but not much, save in special cases, for those who have not, or whose knowledge is obstinately *other*—is even perhaps slightly invidious. It sometimes befalls, however, that the very consciousness of this limitation acts as a challenge to our piety. We consent reluctantly to the mere re-burial of our dead; we know at least that we must not simply have waked them up and left them. The meanings we have read into the hundred names are meanings we feel ashamed not to have read with some intensity that will speak for them to others. We desire for them some profit of the brush we have given them to make them a little less dim. These remain at the end, I daresay, but small ineffectual rites of our own; the images we project may fall across the common path as fairly shapeless shadows. This indeed will depend on their intrinsic value—though of that also there is no hard-and-fast measure. Let us give them then, at the worst, the value of the pleasure derived from the act itself, the act of remembrance lively almost to indiscretion. Every-

thing in a picture, it must be added, depends on the composition; if it be the subject that makes the interest, it is the composition that makes, or that at any rate expresses, the subject. By that law, accordingly, our boxful of ghosts "compose," hang together, consent to a mutual relation, confess, in fact, to a mutual dependence. If it is a question of living again, they can live but by each other's help, so that they close in, join hands, press together for warmth and contact. The picture, before it can be denied, is therefore so made; the sitters are all in their places, and the group fills the frame. We see thereby what has operated, we both recognise, so to speak, the principle of composition and are enabled to name the subject. The subject is the *period*—it is the period that holds the elements together, rounds them off, makes them right. They partake of it, they preserve it, in return; they justify it, and it justifies the fond chronicler. Periods really need no excuses. Which, again, is how I find my way round to a certain confidence.

Even if this argument be weak, I am moved further to observe, I should still not have been able to resist the charm working in the words by which I come nearest to the character of my boxful. "A vanished society" is a label before

which, wherever it be applied, the man of imagination must inevitably pause and muse. It is, for any bundle of documents, the most touching title in the world, and has only to be fairly legible to shed by itself a grace. What lurks behind it is *necessarily* the stuff of pictures, and, whether memory may assist or no, fancy, under the appeal, never refuses her hand. However generalised the effect must remain, there is something in it of the sweetness of old music faintly heard, something of the mellowness of candlelight in old saloons. Do we know why it is we all ruefully, but quite instinctively, think of the persons grouped in such an air as having had, though they were not to know it, a better "time" than we? For we are surely conscious of that conviction, the source of which we perceive to be excess of our modern bliss. We have more things than they, but we have less and less room for them, either in our lives or in our minds; so that even if our taste is superior we have less the use of it, and thereby, to our loss, less enjoyment of our relations. The quality of these suffers more and more from the quantity, and it is in the quantity alone that we to-day make anything of a show. The theory would perfectly be workable that we have not time for friendships—any more, doubtless, than for en-

mities; luxuries, both, as to which time is essential. Friendships live on the possibility of contact, that contact which requires in some degree margin and space. We are planted at present so close that selection is smothered; contact we have indeed, but only in the general form which is cruel to the particular. That is logically the ground of our envy of other generations. The particular contact, under whatever delusion, could flourish with them and give what it had; they were not always on the way to some other, snatching a mouthful between trains. Therefore it is that under the candlelight and the music of the old saloons we see our friends seated and lingering, able to see and hear and communicate. That perhaps is the great difference, but it is everything. In our own world we are all on our feet, with our elbows in each other's ribs, peering as we can through small interstices and pushing our way through the mass. We have abjured the retentive sofa, which we view as the refuge of simplicity, and, save the *buffet* at which we scramble, the only piece of furniture that matters for us is the clock that, so far from detaining, urgently dismisses us. We think of the old clocks, do what we will—and it is our moral—as incorrigibly slow.

## II.

### CAMBRIDGE AND BOSTON.

William Story was served by fortune in this way as in various others, that he chose his career just at the right moment, was not moved to emigrate, or was not able to, before he could feel that he had faced his alternatives. The earliest impatiences of his youth were spent; he had imbibed what New England could give him in the way of preparation. He had left college and embraced a profession; he had married and become a father and written books—law-books, of accomplished merit, the value of which subsists: a substantial "Story on Contracts," that was to know five editions; a "Story on Sales," that was to be, down to our own day, variously re-edited, to be approved by the best judges; to say nothing of three volumes of Reports of the United States Circuit Court, First Circuit, 1837-1845. He was upwards of thirty when he left America for his long residence in Rome, a

residence which, though briefly interrupted during the first years, was the result of an act particularly pondered and designed, and which continued to the day of his death. The act was a choice, if ever a choice was, with the sense of what he renounced fully mature in him, and with a lively intelligence, though doubtless with some admirably confused ideas—and this is a part of the interest of his record—in respect to what he preferred. He preferred, with all the candour with which people were at that time, all over the world, preferring it, to become an "artist," and he had to look his traditions well in the face to enunciate the preference. He could indeed do this the more easily as they were numerous and positive, as rich as such matters admitted of being; and, if the forces that make these situations dramatic need to be well confronted, they fully met the requirement.

He published in the year 1851 a copious and highly interesting Life of his distinguished father, one of the Associate Justices of the Supreme Court of the United States and author of the celebrated Commentaries; and the book is practically itself, for the perceptive mind, a statement of what may in this connection especially be called the case of his future. These volumes, which are excellently put together are

still more a precious New England document, giving, as they do, a picture of the local conditions that was the more luminous for being, as we feel, but half designed. It was impossible that those conditions could have been better expressed, altogether, than in the character and the career of Judge Story; because they were so expressed in their highest beauty and amenity. That, as we see his embarrassed son, is precisely what illuminates and distinguishes the episode: that William Story had not, like so many young votaries of chisel and brush, young languishers for Italy and "art," to react against the ugly, the narrow or the cruel, but against an influence that had everything in its favour save its being the right one for *him*. All the *light*, surely, that the Puritan tradition undefiled had to give, it gave, with free hands, in Judge Story—culture, courtesy, liberality, humanity, at their best, the last finish of the type and its full flower. His son's biography is an ample record of this, the picture of a man in whom, as one reads, one encounters no element and no act that is not genial and fine, not gentle in a high sense and not *positively* marked—rarest in general of all impressions—with distinction. The note is the old and obvious note, for the observer of the race from which Joseph Story sprang, the note of

active virtue, virtue cultivated and practised, as the aim and the meaning of life; only his is one of the cases in which it appears to us to shine without a shadow. If his morality was far enough from being, in the common sense, "easy," his temper, admirably so, evidently kept the air of intercourse with him free from the pedantry of morals and presented him in the happy aspect of a thorough New-Englander of his time who was yet also, to his great gain, a man of the world.

Nothing, moreover, in the connection, is more interesting than to see him wear this character on the very basis of *his* world, as it stood, without borrowing a ray, directly, from any other. He at least never crossed the sea nor attempted to force the hand of experience, which opened, to his open mind, freely enough. His biographer has indeed occasion to tell the story of his having, toward the end of his life, come sufficiently near the visit to Europe to have missed it by the turn of a hair—an episode touching, quite thrilling, to the interested reader, and as to which I shall say another word; all the more that our second thought is almost to rejoice at his hindrance. He was complete, to a particular shade, as we see him; and my point is, at any rate, that he had made up his high civility of the material immediately surrounding him. In the memorial

chapel of the cemetery of Mount Auburn, near Boston, sits, among those of other good citizens from other hands, the delightful figure of his father produced early in William Story's career as a sculptor and not afterwards, as a portrait-statue, surpassed by him—he having been at his happiest, in this way, when inspired by the closest of his personal ties: witness as well the admirably expressive symbolic image wrought by him, in the fulness of time, as the last work of his hand, for the tomb of his wife. I depend for my impression of the monument in the Cambridge chapel upon a remembrance from long ago, that of an autumn walk, in funereal alleys, terminating in the lift given my depressing recreation by a sudden turn, through open doors with which I was unacquainted, into the company of those eminent few whom native art had, in its degree, effectively rescued from death — effectively, at least, as then appeared to me, with Judge Story's presentment (seated and gowned, with uplifted emphatic hand, and benevolent head slightly inclined), the most effective of all. One might take him there either as delivering a judgment in court or explaining a principle from his Harvard chair—the thing, finely generalised, meets both appearances; but, whatever the moment selected, it expressed the character that made one exclaim

"What a *lovable* great man!" The author of these remarks is reminded by his type, and above all by what we have called his amenity, of something once said to himself by an accomplished French critic, the son of a famous father, who, much versed in the writings of Englishmen and Americans, had been dilating with emphasis and with surprise upon the fine manner of Hawthorne, whose distinction was so great, whose taste, without anything to account for it, was so *juste*. "Il sortait de Boston, de Salem, *de je ne sais quel trou*"—and yet there he was, full-blown and finished. So it was, my friend surely would have said, with the elder Story. He came, practically, out of the same "hole" as Hawthorne, and might to the alien mind have been as great a surprise.

Thus it is then, at all events, that we take licence to think of him as very much so seated, slightly smiling, discreetly insisting, but imperturbable, in the scale that his son's adoption of the æsthetic answer to the problem of existence had by its simple weight to bear down. We can without impugning his discretion easily imagine his asking if such a heritage as he himself, for instance, represented had been duly weighed—when the question, that is, was of the quantity of stepping from under it that might be held to be involved in the European art-life. It was

William Story's advantage that he was, by the turn of his mind, sure—as he was afterwards also sure, almost always sure, of many things, with plenty of the love of discussion that makes our certainties sociable ; for he could scarce have afforded (with what may be called moral comfort) to be materially less so. He was launched, under the highest auspices in the country, in the profession of the Law, to which a side of his mind had shown itself as distinctly adapted ; his activity in this direction had already excited a just confidence, and those favouring circumstances for which many men long wait in vain already showed him their fair face. His great awkwardness was in the fact that, for a rupture with his particular conditions, he should have greatly, not vulgarly, to justify himself—since there would be otherwise in his case an element of the ridiculous. The justification, distinctly, came with the years, as a man is always justified, save for cruelty, when he has succeeded in living the real life of his mind. But it took, first and last, a good deal of demonstration—the sense of which, doubtless, for that matter, may well have been, in part, the secret of Story's multifarious æsthetic activities, his variety of experiment and expression. There was always a voice in the air for him—"You would have made an excellent

lawyer." He would not perhaps, though, with some of his parts, he perhaps ought to have; but that is one of the ways in which the conscience enriches existence. He had, at the last resort, before he took his step, the good fortune of a simple *want*. This was, dimly seen, for what he succeeded in enjoying—the air itself of the world of art, with which the air he found himself breathing had so little in common. He had, as the phrase is, nothing to show, could point, with confidence and effect, to no work of design stamped even with the appeal of having been achieved under difficulties. He could take his stand not on his strength, but only—it is not too much to say—on his weakness, that of having wants for which the world about him made no provision.

This it is again that has the interest of taking us back to the time. It was a time at which the appetite he professed was really not, in the absence of any light, any material, for recognising it, susceptible of recognition. And he on his side had to sail away with it into the void, which he gallantly did, with every presumption in his favour still to be established. His departure for Europe took place, as a matter of fact, after his father's death, but that he had in the latter's lifetime practically betrayed his peril is suggested

by his quoting somewhere the voice of home on his mother's lips. "Well, William, I've known in my life many a fool, but I've never known so great a one." The character so conferred was of application, naturally, but to the particular crisis; what is touching, however, is that it had, for the hour, to be quite consciously accepted and worn. The fool was clever enough to see that he must be good-humoured about that appearance — to which precursors in general have, in fact, more or less to resign themselves. It was unmistakable that he could be accused of making light of a heritage singularly precious; which, on the other hand, was an opportunity for discrimination *not*, in America in those days, the most frequent. That in turn brings me again to my claim for the special appeal made, to the retrospective mind, by this small passage of history. There was half a century ago, in the American world in general, much less to give up, for "Europe," than there is to-day, but, such as it was, Story gave it up all. To-day there is vastly more, but, at the same time, people are now not called upon for these detachments—by which I mean that they are scarcely possible. It has really ceased to be feasible, in other words, to get away from America. The west is in the

east, the east, by the same token, more and more in the west, and every one and everything everywhere and anywhere but where they, in the vernacular, belong. Where any one or anything does belong is no longer a determinable, is scarce even a discussable, matter. In the simpler age I speak of these congruities might still be measured. And I may add that when I speak of the ingenuous precursor as giving up, I so describe in him but the personal act of absence. That was often compatible in him, after all, with the absolutely undiminished possession of the American consciousness. This property he carried about with him as the Mohammedan pilgrim carries his carpet for prayer, and the carpet, as I may say, was spread wherever the camp was pitched. The carpets of other pilgrims were certain, almost anywhere, to place themselves beside it—on which, in all good faith, amid the very depths they had sought to fathom, the little company could huddle. That good faith, among the perils, those that were perhaps even most of all perils of perception, forms half the quaintness of the old-time picture. It was impossible, at any rate, for a native to have been more absent, for long years, than William Story, but even on these terms, in the long-run his nativity was justified of him. Exactly that,

however, is what I shall have better occasion to show.

To an Italian acquaintance who sought information of him for an article, of which he was to be the subject, in a Review, he made toward the end of his life such an enumeration of primary facts as I cannot do better, in respect at least to the earlier, than repeat in his own words.

"Born in Salem, Massachusetts, February 12th, 1819. My father was the Hon. Mr Justice Story, of the national Supreme Court, and my mother the daughter of Judge Wetmore and granddaughter of General Waldo, a distinguished officer in the English army employed in the American colonies in the middle of the last century. He commanded at the siege of Louisburg and at its capture and at the capture of the place from the French, and received from the Crown the grant of a whole county in Maine as a reward for his services. My father was a man of extraordinary capacity, intellect and goodness. He was made Speaker of the House, in Massachusetts, at twenty-five years of age; then Representative to Congress, and then, at the age of thirty-two, Judge of the Supreme Court—the youngest man who ever received that dignity, which, in the U.S., outranks all but that of

President. He wrote many and celebrated works on jurisprudence, which are known throughout Europe. His decisions are quoted in England as of highest authority. He founded the college of the Law at Harvard, and there lectured for many years as professor. Under his training many of the most distinguished men of America were brought up. A noble man, a brilliant, and as good as he was great.

"He left Salem when I was ten years of age, and went to Cambridge, near Boston. My life was thenceforward chiefly spent there. I entered Harvard University at fifteen and graduated at nineteen, delivering a public poem on my graduation. I then studied the Law for three years under my father, entered the profession, and practised in all the courts on leaving him, and was engaged in several most important cases. I married when I was twenty-three, was appointed commissioner in Bankruptcy and commissioner of the U.S. Courts for Massachusetts, Maine and Pennsylvania; also reporter for the U.S. Circuit Courts. I practised my profession for six years; and during this time wrote a 'Treatise on the Law of Contracts,' 2 vols. octavo, of about 1000 pages each (now in its 6th or 7th edition); a 'Treatise on Sales of Personal Property,' 1 vol., now in its 6th edition. Both were adopted as

text-books in the Law school, and I also published 3 vols. of reports of Law Cases, all in their 3rd edition now. Further I published, at twenty-two, a first volume of poems. During the six years of my legal career I produced, sometimes under a feigned name, sometimes under my own, a good deal of poetry and criticism.

"On the death of my father in 1846 a public monument and statue were decreed to him, and to my great surprise I was requested to make them. I had hitherto amused myself, in hours of leisure, with modelling, but more with painting, and I used to get up early in the morning to work at these before going to my office. I had begun to model and paint while in college. On receiving the commission I have mentioned I declined it, from a sense of my incapacity—I didn't think I could carry it out. But I was so strongly urged to try that I finally consented on condition that I should come abroad first and see what had been done in these ways. I accordingly, in October 1847, sailed for Italy, and thence travelled over the Continent and England; afterwards, on my return, making my sketch, which was accepted. I remained at home for eight months, working very hard all day at the Law, and wrote an additional volume to 'Contracts,' and a biography, in two volumes, of

my father. I was haunted, however, by dreams of art and Italy, and every night fancied I was again in Rome and at work in my studio. At last I found my heart had gone over from the Law to Art, and I determined to go back to Rome. I came, and here modelled and executed the statue of my father, now in Cambridge, and another. I then once more returned to America and the Law, but at last, after another year of them, I definitely decided to give up everything for Art. My mother thought me mad and urged me to pursue my legal career, in which everything was open to me, rather than take such a leap in the dark. But I had chosen, and I came back to Italy, where I have lived nearly ever since."

He relates further that—somewhat to anticipate—recognition and success had been far from prompt in justifying him. He worked in Rome for several years with assiduity, producing, among various things, a figure of Hero holding up her torch to Leander, and those known as his Cleopatra and his Libyan Sibyl.

"These I executed in marble, but no one would buy them; so that, disappointed, I determined on a new rupture, a break with art and Rome,

and a return to my old profession. This was in 1862. But it so happened that the London universal exhibition was to take place and that I was requested to allow these two statues to go into the Roman Court, the Roman Government taking charge of them and paying all expenses. I gave them; I never wrote a word to any one about them; but shortly after they arrived, before the exhibition was open, I received a copy of the 'Times' with a most flattering notice of them, declaring them the most remarkable and original works there, and, at the same time, by letter, an offer of £3000 for them, by which I was quite astounded. I had offered them only two months before for their mere cost, and yet had failed to sell them. This gave me confidence; I continued to work; and since then my life has been dedicated to art. This was long ago, but, as there is no end to art, I am as hard at work as ever."

He enumerates, further, the volumes of prose and verse that he has published, the papers, collected and uncollected, that he has contributed to periodicals; but these things are but the particulars, and I have thus promptly quoted the greater part of the statement because it expresses compactly the essence of Story's life. The life

itself, governed, in its singularly happy personal conditions, by the idea of free plastic production, was of the smoothest, brightest and simplest, as the lives of men of distinction go; simplest, I say, because, though it was far from empty, was in fact quite enviably comprehensive, it unfolded itself altogether from within, and was at no moment at the mercy of interventions or shocks. He knew, in the course of his days, no interference of the fates—none, that is, with his personal plan; he had no adventure beyond *the* adventure, which we take for granted, of having given way to his inspiration; and this, I gather, is the great sign of good fortune. Ill fortune, for the man conscious of gifts, is *not* to have been able to unfold from within; there is no other that in comparison with it matters. Of such ill fortune William Story, breathing from early manhood to the end the air he loved, which was the air, all round, of romantic beauty, never in any degree tasted; so that his course—certainly in outward seeming—was almost the monotony of the great extremes of ease. Nothing really happened to him but to be his remarkably animated and various, his exuberant, sympathetic, intensely natural self: which had the effect of filling out quite sufficiently, and very richly, the frame of life for him, as well as contributing to

its content for many other persons. We *have* his career, in short, if we read into the lines I have just cited from his note to the Italian critic, Signor Nencioni, all the play of imagination and taste, of eager feeling and eager energy, of passion, conviction, friendship, humour and curiosity, that they would take. The interest, therefore, is in the detail, and largely in the circumstances themselves (almost always, as we eternally say, picturesque) that kept producing the quantity of lively response. And the circumstances, precisely, are what we are still able more or less to recover. The circumstances are the personal names, the personal presences, the personal interests, beliefs, so queer and charming and touching, often, the general mass of current history and current sensibility, that, as a generation, we have moved away from. They are in short the vanished society that I began by speaking of.

I should like to begin again, much further back, under the impression of the earlier time that the record of Judge Story's life irresistibly produces. One hovers about it, this earlier time, as with a shy tenderness for people whom one wishes not to patronise, but who were so all unknowing of the greater interest their country, their society, their possibilities were likely to

acquire. There is in particular in the first volume of the biography a chapter consisting of letters descriptive of a journey to Catskill, Trenton Falls and Niagara, made, in 1825, in company with Daniel Webster and his wife, which affects us somehow—for we cannot altogether say why—as a subtly suggestive document. The beauty of the land, the forests, rivers and lakes, then comparatively unblemished and as full as one wished of a sort of after-sense of Fenimore Cooper; the homeliness of the ways and conveniences, the decency and deliberation of the travellers, their cheerful austerity and the combination of their undeveloped standards and their enlightened interest—are all things that evoke for us the whole tone of a community and that refresh us in truth by their betrayal of what was absent from it. What was absent, we seem to feel, was our own precious element of the ready-made, whether in appreciation, in description, or in "effect" itself, as we are so fond of saying—so that effect itself has at last learnt to hand out to us automatically the counters with which we play at having perceived it. I lack space to quote from this record, but it would quite suggest a subject to a student of the history of manners. These, as we see them here, at Judge Story's level, are so good as to be

admirable; with existence giving us, in the light of them, the sense of a large, square, high-windowed room, all clean and cool and thoroughly swept, of sparse, excellent furniture, of a delicious absence of rubbish. The only quarter in which this last element appears to have been more or less tolerated was that of literature; it was not tolerated in the moral quarter, or in that of conduct. Literature, on the other hand, was small and, like the old-fashioned room of my simile, cool. It was not the hothouse for rank growths that it has since become. One of the notes that most holds us—as to the vision of social intercourse, of personal ties—is the universal "Mr" of the male address. It was apparently in use with Judge Story for all his friends, for his colleagues, however familiar—a fact that we think of as throwing a light on *relations*, as they existed in that more straitened world, as showing how little provision, so to speak, was made for them. We see that the normal relation of intimacy, the only one at all conceived, was, rigidly, that of a man's fireside —his intimacy with his wife, his children and his Creator. The others, the outside ones, remained formal, civil, dutiful, but never could have become easy, we judge, without appearing to become frivolous. And if this was the case

for men's relations with other men, it must have been still more marked for their relations with women. They had none, obviously, but with their proper wives, and with a wife every man was duly provided. The age of Sunday afternoon calls at tea-time, when all the men go out and all the women, in the odd phrase of to-day, "sit in," was still far in the future.

This light glance is directed, however, as we pass, but at the generation then about to disappear, not to Story's own, whose freedom of friendship, beginning early and lasting late, forms not the least interesting element of his life. We have seen that he went to college—as they must go in the Arcadia of our dreams, if they go at all—at fifteen, and in this connection the view, for us, immediately alters, shifts to a picture of young affections and alliances dancing, ever so mirthfully, of warm summer evenings, among the slim, vague Corot trees of the old Harvard "yard," to the sound of the oaten pipe. That note indeed — the murmur of Arcady itself, that of innocent versified homage, precocious and profuse, mingled with the rustle of feathery elms—pervades the crepuscular scene and makes us think of it wistfully. The young, by the usual American law, formed and cultivated more ties than their elders, besides naturally forming, with

much promptness, the particular one that was to supersede all others. Marriage was early, in spite of an exception or two, and the frolic pipe was as brief as it was pure. William Story had the happiness of taking to wife at twenty-three, as we have seen, Miss Emelyn Eldredge, of Boston, and of entering thereby into a relation of which the security, the felicity, the general vivifying virtue, remained to the end of his days ideal. This union, in its unsurpassable closeness, was one of those things, in its kind, that still suffice to confer success in life, as Pater has it, even if everything else have failed. James Russell Lowell, of the same age as himself, his lifelong friend and his closest, ran his course at college during the same years, just after Charles Sumner, with whom he was to remain scarce less nearly allied; and Lowell also married, for the first time, at twenty-five. Sumner was one of the few exceptions, and Sumner was in many ways—above all as to the supreme amplitude of the career reserved for him—exceptional. But the rest of the young company of the time were friends too of each other's friends, admirers, visitors, guileless invokers, of each other's brides that were to be; and we see the whole little society, in the light of the decent manners of the time, as carrying out, with studies, emotions,

enthusiasms, with confidences in short, all shared, the dim Arcadian appearance with which they beset us. If they were pleased with themselves and with each other they were pleased, for the most part, with every one else, from Goethe to Lydia Maria Child. Lowell was, among them, the most critical spirit, but even Lowell conceived that this lady, "of all American women who have yet put their minds into print, has shown the most of what can be truly called genius." Which might indeed, in those blessed years, very pleasantly be · the question had still the advantage of not becoming urgent.

It was, however, over the New England Cambridge of that and of later periods that Lowell's irony played most gently, and his admirable prose strain was to soften nowhere to such tenderness, or to flower in such brave paradox, as in musing, whether orally or in print, over that spacious village community of his youth which was at the same time a collegiate society; the spot dedicated to all high pieties from the first, on which the most strenuous band of independents we know were to seat, from the first, in all impatience, their voluntary tribute to culture. He was ever ready to defend the thesis that it had been, from the day Washington took command of the Continental army under its historic

elm, the most virtuous and luminous, the most distinguished and delightful, of human societies. In this happy valley of the Charles, at any rate, as described in "Fireside Travels," the finer spirits of new boyhood and youth dreamed, adventured, rejoiced together, inheriting those fruits of neighbourhood which their elders had more soberly gathered; fruits that were to ripen afterwards under other suns, in maturity, in Italy, in England, as more than one of the other papers in "Fireside Travels," for instance, betrays. There were of course other spirits than those I have mentioned, more or less of the same original participation, notably Richard Henry Dana of the classic "Two Years before the Mast" and of graver, and still higher, distinctions; but I am limited to such reference, simply, as my bundle of letters may illustrate; which, if it contains a considerable number of Lowell's, and a still greater number of Charles Sumner's, has no other series beginning so far back. Only a few of Story's own letters to Lowell appear to have been kept by the latter, nor, evidently, do we possess all of Lowell's to Story. Of these, however, those that remain are, as we shall see, full of interest and character. None, nevertheless, are so peculiarly full of character as Sumner's, which, to my sense, quite excellently possess

that merit. If the value of a letter, for posterity, depends on the intensity with which this personal colour attaches—and save in the case of disclosures of unsuspected fact it can scarce attach to anything else so much—Sumner easily remains individual and inimitable. The four volumes of his copious Life by Mr Edward Pearce will doubtless already have appeared to testify sufficiently to this truth. I cannot, at all events, help seeing it shine out in the very earliest of his written communications that comes to my own hand; which I reproduce, without hesitation, and in spite of its somewhat invidious bearing, for the sake of its personal accent. Also, even, let me add, just *for* the invidious bearing—so little invidious at this time of day, and so conceivably to be taken with an easy allowance, all round; the appearance being that, like many young men of natural parts, Story, while at college, was inclined to let himself go in almost any direction but that of effort. And it is a question of the delinquencies of a boy of seventeen or eighteen, while his monitor sits within sound of Niagara; as to the impression of which wonder of nature it is characteristic that the latter, pointing his moral, will not frivolously relax into a remark.

*Charles Sumner to W. W. Story.*

"Clifton House, Niagara Falls,
Canada, *Aug.* 30*th*, 1836.

"My dear William,—I cannot be unmindful of you even at this distant land in the imposing noise of waters which fills my ears. I think of your studies and of your employment of your time often when you perhaps heed them quite indifferently; and I think of them now, especially as you are about commencing another academic year. You told me to write you; and I know the goodness of your nature too well to fear that you will take exception to what I shall write under the shelter of that invitation. There are few persons in the world in whom I take so lively an interest as in yourself; whose course I watch so anxiously and whose success would give me such delight. Let me, then, take the liberty of a friend and address one word to you, from the fulness of my heart, in regard to your future conduct. I shall speak with plainness, and must allude to what you have done, or rather (must I so phrase it?) to what you have *not* done. Shortly before I left home Dr Beck and Professor Felton were at my office, and I inquired of them both what were your standing, prospects of a part, and general character. I was grieved and astonished

to hear from them that you were now so low as to be out of the range of a part, so that unless you rose you would never appear on the stage. All the faculty, they said, had the fullest confidence in your talents and capacity, but thought you remiss and gay and easily persuaded by others from your duties. Both spoke of you in the strongest terms of personal interest. What I had observed of your conduct had, in a degree, prepared me for this sad declaration.

"Now, shall this state continue? Will you refuse to repay the anxious care which your instructors exercise towards you by a respectful attention to your college duties? Do you decline to gratify my ardent hopes of you and my long attachment? Are you prepared to fill with grief, as I fear you have already with anxiety, the bosoms of your affectionate parents and sister? Let me ask you to forsake (in college phrase *cut*) all your idle acquaintance, begin the new year with new resolutions and follow them with performance, study all your lessons faithfully, never let an exercise go by without thoroughly understanding it, and devote that time which is not necessary to your college studies to some profitable reading. When I return talk with me about this and let me assist you in contriving

how again to resume your old habits of study. I remember how pleasantly we used to talk over Virgil and the Latin metres, and the interest which you then expressed in study, and your ambition, laudable and generous, of distinction as a scholar. You know that I am no anchorite who would deny the young those pleasures which are innocent and agreeable, and that I would not advise to anything which I did not think for your good. The pleasures which you are now reaching after, and for which you are sacrificing the precious fruits of knowledge, are like the apples which floated on the Dead Sea, fair and golden to the sight, but dust and cinders to the touch. Unless you are willing to lay up stores for future repentance, I most affectionately ask you to return to your studies with new ardour, to forsake all idle acquaintances and bad habits which you may have contracted, and to give joy to your parents. From conversations which I have had with your mother I seriously believe that her health has been affected by her anxiety with regard to you. Remove, I pray you, that source of anxiety, and change it into one of honourable pride. Just imagine the power you possess—you can fill the hearts of your parents with rejoicing, or dash them with grief and melancholy Do your duty, my dear boy, and

you cannot fail to crown them with joy—to say nothing of your own happiness, which will be thereby secured, and that of your affectionate friend, CHARLES SUMNER."

Sumner, who had taken his degree in 1834, had had time to settle to his profession—he was launched, in Boston, in the practice of the law; but the portent of the great political career in which these preliminaries were promptly to lose themselves must surely, for his friends, already have hung about him. His allocution, admirable for weight and sincerity, is already almost Senatorial. These indeed are but stray lights. I catch, however, what I can, and, could I find anything of Lowell's prior to 1842, would make haste to give it for the love of any old-time touch, any faint light of adolescence groping in that medium, that it might contain. Of a date corresponding with the writer's twenty-third year there is one, addressed to the young lady to whom his friend was then engaged, which is happily producible, and in which, though concerned with trifles that have turned to dust, every lover of Lowell, among those who still remain, will pleasantly taste the promise of his quality. These, in fact, *are* the lights of adolescence, in the case of the eminent who have still

been juvenile at twenty-three, as Lowell himself was, for that matter, to the last year of his life. Adolescence even then, he would delightfully have pleaded, was not complete in him. There appears here, moreover, for the first time, that strange dim shade of William Page, painter of portraits, who peeps unseizably, almost tormentingly, out of other letters, who looms so large to Story's and to Lowell's earlier view, who offers the rare case of an artist of real distinction, an earnest producer, almost untraceable less than half a century after his death, and about whom, in fine, so far as is scantly possible, there will be more to say.

*J. R. Lowell to Miss Emelyn Eldredge.*

"Boston, *April* 12*th*, 1842.

. . . "I am glad Jane 'Shore' is so charming a person. She will be quite an addition to the 'band' when you bring her on hither with you. She will be introduced, I imagine, to a quite new and strange, and, I trust, pleasant, state of society—I mean in our little circle. You are very gay, I hear, in New York, balls, &c., being the standard amusements provided for every evening. . . . Ah! we poor puritanical Boston people will seem quite tame and flat, I am afraid, to young ladies who have been in the

everyday society of Moustaches, and who have met foreign ambassadors face to face. One thing I beseech. Do not bring home a New York dress which with the extravagant tastes and propensities of the skirt will preclude the possibility of a friend's walking with you on one of our narrow side-walks. And so you have seen a 'New York trancendentalist'? Truly it is hard to imagine such a personage. However, by steadily bracing the mind to thinking of angels in tournures or in French boots and moustaches, one can gradually recall the natural state of the mind and prepare it for receiving the idea of the strange species above-named.

"But, my dear child, I will leave nonsense, and say half a dozen serious words. I have an excuse in the fact that I yesterday returned from Salem, where we had spent 'Fast' week. You were all that we missed. We had a very good time indeed, doing of course just what we pleased. We waltzed, or acted charades, or enjoyed *tête-à-têtes* on the stairs or in the library, or joked, or did *something* all the time. An ingenious friend who was patient enough to count the number of puns made in the space of twenty minutes, found them to be 75, or a little more than three in a minute. The recoil from such a state of mind is either into stupidity or a greater degree

of nonsense. In my case, I experience an agreeable mixture of both.

"I am glad you have been to see Page. I think he is, in many respects, the most remarkable painter we have, and I freely confess that I had rather have his portrait of Mrs Loring than *the* Vandyke. If you see him again do give him my very best remembrance and love. I wish Jane Shaw were going to be painted by him. Has he finished his picture of Jephthah's daughter yet? That will, I hope, establish his fame. The fault of Page has been a propensity to try experiments, a propensity ruinous to present and often to lasting success—as Leonardo da Vinci proves. He has hardly ever profited by what experience he had already gained, so desirous has he been of acquiring more. In short, he has seldom painted as well as he could.

"I should advise you also to visit Mrs Child. Of all American women who have put their minds in print, she has shown the most of what can be truly called genius.

"Visiting persons like Page and her will keep your heart balanced when it is in danger from the fashion and frivolity of which you must necessarily see so much. This is the glory of Art. It is She who has nursed the soul and kept it alive so long. It is She who keeps

fresh in us some touches of our higher nature, some memories of a more divine and blessed life. I have not any fear for a heart so pure and true as yours is, my dear Emelyn, but if I were exposed to similar influences I should take the same remedies myself. I should read more poetry, the more fashion and hollowness I saw. For it is impossible for any one otherwise to save themselves from infection."

Story's own earliest letters are few; but in those before me, of that period, all addressed to his father, the tone of the time, the somewhat pale panorama, is pleasantly and (if one must come back to that) even quaintly reflected. Youth, moreover, is seldom itself pale—when it is verily youth; visibly, at any rate, Story's was not; it flushed responsive to such colour, whatever that was, as the world about it could show. The *Lexington* was a steamboat, plying on Long Island Sound, in which Judge Story had just made part of his annual journey to Washington, and which, on its return voyage, had been horribly burned, with the all but total loss of its passengers and crew.

*W. W. Story to Judge Story.*

"CAMBRIDGE, MASS., *Jan. 25th*, 1840.

"DEAR FATHER,—I have a half hour before church to write to you, with nothing, however, to say. But a letter is a letter any way, and, inasmuch as its very being supposes all alive and well, is to that extent satisfactory. This therefore is my screen. We were all particularly glad to hear of your safe arrival at Washington, on account of the anxiety we felt concerning the *Lexington*; the news of its destruction having reached us several days before your first letter announcing your safe quarters at Washington. Your passage must have been of all passages the most disagreeable and dangerous. Indeed it seems now universally admitted that the boat was entirely unfit for its employment and has been considered as only a touch and go for some time. She was the same boat that I went to New York in, a year ago, and you may recollect, even then, my stating that she was almost unmanageable owing to a thunder-storm in the Sound. We were obliged to stop repeatedly, and she was so crank as to render every precaution in shifting the ballast necessary to enable her to proceed. This all have known, and the public therefore are, I think, in great measure to blame for this accident. The pro-

prietors will, I hope, not be suffered to go unscathed, for such recklessness in the exposure of life I never heard of. One may well say that life is the cheapest commodity a-going in America! But you have probably thought this all over. Here it is a central point of discussion yet, and the loss of Dr Follen has thrown a great gloom over much of the society in which I am.

"Vacation of course has begun, and many of the students have gone or are on their way to Washington. Some are prevented by the stoppage on the Sound. I have seen and been introduced to a Mr Wilcox, who has come from Alabama to join the school, as I understood him. He is the only new arrival of which I know, though several strange bipeds are to be seen perambulating the deserts of Cambridge. He has the air of a Louisianian, gentlemanly in his manner, but not refined in his appearance—as most of the Southwesterners are. I have heard no prospectus of the school any further.

"The rage of Boston has turned from parties to lectures. What with Waldo Emerson and Useful Knowledge, and Lowell Institute and Grammar and Temperance, the whole world is squeezed through the pipe of science. All go to be filled, as the students of old went with their bowl for milk. Yesterday the tickets for

Dr Palfrey's lectures on Revealed Religion were given out gratis (being Lowell Institute), and the crowd was so immense that they were obliged to shut the doors and arrange the people in lines to receive them. Silliman's are just finished, and it has been usual to go at 6—the lectures beginning at 7.30 and ending at 10!—in order to get seats. Besides this the lectures are repeated in the next afternoon for those who cannot be accommodated, and with this all who wish cannot hear. Even Whitfield had scarcely greater audiences. He will be obliged to take the Common to satisfy the Commons! With all this there is no gaiety and no party-going; all the world of fashion is closed.

"I am just reading Plutarch, with great pleasure and benefit, I think. His narrative is very amusing and captivating; but it astonishes me to see how full of superstition and how easy a dupe he is. As soon as I forget that I am reading an old Greek writer, some absurd remark or story sends me back, over the waste of time, to the period in which he wrote. One of the least satisfactory lives is that of Cæsar. Why have all the world's greatest conquerors had the worst historians? Napoleon, Cromwell, Alexander and Cæsar. The opposing parties seem to have had much more interest to pull down the reputation

of each than the friends have to raise it up. Vengeance outlasts friendship, and sorrow cuts deeper than joy! The Indians are the only nation who remember *kindness* on principle. The principle of others seems to be 'Cheat your best friends when their backs are turned!' I'm at the end of my sheet; are you of your patience?"

The next has the interest of giving reality to that earlier professional character in the writer which, for many of those who knew him after his revolutions had taken place, might have seemed to belong to the realm of fable. But life was ever abundant in him; whatever he turned to was the reality, for him, of the hour; and, as he was nothing if not animated, it will be seen that he was as much so here as ever again in Roman studios and drawing-rooms, Roman excursions and discussions. The affair of the Ursuline Nuns, which strikes an odd note in the place and at the date, had been that of the destruction of their house at Somerville, near Boston, by an anti-Catholic mob.

*W. W. Story to Judge Story.*

"Boston, *Jan.* 21*st*, 1842.

"Dear Father,—I take the first moment which has been given me of leisure this week to

send a word to you. We have been full of business in the Common Pleas, and have finished all but one of our cases. Judge Warren behaved very well; and upon the whole I found him a better judge than I had preconceived him to be. His worst fault is that he jumps too soon to a conclusion, and is obliged to retract. Such a contrast to Judge Sprague I have never seen; it was quite odd to go from one side of the court to the other—the cautious, fearful egg-treading of the one, and the slap-dash rapidity of the other. Our Long-wharf case broke down on the ruling of Warren; that no amount of usage could establish a prescriptive right, when in injury of a valuable easement or privilege, because the use is and must be construed as being permissive. I hope this is so. He took a verdict *pro forma* for 75 dolls. and the law goes up to Supreme Court. It seems to me that a public prescription can only be made out by proof of *universal* as well as adverse enjoyment. Our corn case, after a trial of two days and a half, turned up in our favour—though Judge Warren was inclined to think that the usage of trade could not modify a positive contract. But he gave that up.

"The restless spirit of the Bostonians has set them again by the ears. A man called Elder

Knapp has been preaching fire and fury against the Unitarians, with a spirit of rancorous hostility; and the good people saw fit to mob and threaten, but the Mayor resorted to the universal American specific for all things, and speechified them all away. But there was some little excitement the next night because the Lancers had been ordered out with ball-cartridges. However, we are more like the English than the rest of the country in this respect, and have a great notion of order and obedience This was only a sputter of fire out of iron; and nobody doubts that we shall not hear any more of it.

"Our bankrupt law has set itself upon an overhanging cliff, and I fear that it will fall over. If Mr Clay will stand by his principles there is some hope, is there not? that it will not pass the Senate. The House is always such a seething turbulent mass that no law has any foothold in it; but this legislation is too fickle and outrageous. The people here are not disposed to sit down very quietly under it — but what can they do? Is there any hope that Tyler will veto it? if for nothing else than to show that he has the power so to do. In the House of R.'s here there is a petition offered to-day for a pecuniary remuneration of the Ursuline Convent Nuns. Curtis presents it."

He writes shortly afterwards with the advantage of referring to a contemporary matter that has still, comparatively, its vividness; and I leave the last paragraph, too, in memory of his alertness.

*W. W. Story to Judge Story.*

"Boston, *Feb. 3rd*, 1842.

"Dear Father,—I have been intending to write to you for several days, but my time has been very much occupied and this must be my excuse. I have not seen any letters from you since you went away, but suppose that you are as well and comfortable as the circumstances of the case admit. Yes, I did hear one letter from you, read by Mr Quincy, at the Dickens dinner; but it was not peculiarly intimate in its character. The dinner, by the way, was the most successful that I ever knew in wit, eloquence and good feeling. The whole arrangements of the table were good, and no speech was out of taste except perhaps Bancroft's, who played to 'the people' till the words tired me out. But the whole company was dead to him, and his words fell lifeless around him. It was a piece of declamation! Hillard's was beautiful. I send you a report of the whole which will give you some idea of it—better, at least, than I can in

a short page. Dickens himself is frank and hearty, and with a considerable touch of rowdyism in his manner. But his eyes are fine, and the whole muscular action of the mouth and lower part of the face beautifully free and vibratory. People *eat* him here! never was there such a revolution; Lafayette was nothing to it. But he is too strong and healthy a mind to be spoiled even by the excessive adulation and flattery that he receives. Mrs D. is said to be a pleasant person, but I have not talked with her. D., I hope, you will see at Washington; he leaves Boston on Saturday for N. Y. Sumner has been tied to him ever since his arrival. Any one might have found him all last week in his room, with Alexander, on one side, taking his portrait, and Dexter, on the other, modelling his bust, with about 50 persons crowding up to talk to him. He is now rather unwell, from excitement, I suppose, and disappointed Mrs Paige, who gave a dinner to him yesterday."

Mr George Ticknor Curtis, already then eminent at the Boston bar, and in whose office Story was pursuing his initiation, adds a "My dear Sir" to this letter. "William," he says, "has kindly left me a corner. . . . He is getting on very well, and if he has as much comfort in our con-

nection as I have, it is a very 'profitable' one in *one* sense. We have dined the Dickens, and a good and great soul he is. There will be no danger, I think, of spoiling him. As he himself told us, I am afraid you will miss him in the shifting of his and your scenes of action." And of the lion of the hour William again writes to his father: "Dickens let off so much of the gas of enthusiasm that people have been quiet since his departure. By the way, I gave him a letter of introduction to you, thinking perhaps he might reach Washington before you return. He is well worth seeing. The English authors have a sort of impersonality with us, and are as if they had died years ago; so that this country is a sort of posterity to their works." Story adds in the same letter:—

"I am going on with the Reports, but shall defer any arrangement with regard to publication until I see you. I should prefer that you should look over the proofs, so that no material blunder should pass to the world, and in order that I may have the benefit of your suggestions. I should think now that there were from 20 to 25 cases ready for the press: some of them occupy quite a large space, so that at any time we shall be ready to go to printing. Several arguments

have been sent in which will swell in measure its bulk, and we need not fear for *one* volume.

"William White has returned quite delighted with his journey to the South and as firmly fixed in abolition as ever. He has seen nothing to change his views with regard to slavery, and hates it quite as much as before. Adams's speech he heard, and thought it was a hailstone shower of wrath upon the South which they well deserved. I like the bull-headed sternness and defiance in the old man, and only wish he had had full swing."

Adams was of course ex-President John Quincy. All Story's letters to his father, meanwhile, show him as leading without reserve the life the time then imposed on him; and they make us, in view of the complete detachment he was afterwards so easily to practise, exclaim to ourselves afresh upon the facility of youth. It gives itself with a freedom that is apt to allow to the seasons that follow it a good deal of the gift to take back. We feel, moreover, to-day, or like to think we do, the pulse of the history of the time in many a mere private accident or unconscious sign: with the Civil War still to arrive, that is, though yet undreamt of, no breath of Northern *malaise* on the Slavery question but becomes, and quite

dramatically—at least for the mind addicted to finding more in things than meets the eye—a straw in the dark current setting to great events.

*W. W. Story to Judge Story.*

"Boston, *Jan. 26th*, 1844.

"Dear Father,—I should have written to you before now, but that my engagements have left me not a moment of time. I pinched out what I could however on Wednesday, and went to Cambridge, where I found Mother sitting in M.'s room, improving and in good spirits, having discussed thoroughly the 1st vol. of Princess Dashkow's 'Memoirs of the Court of Catherine II.,' and waiting quietly for the second. M. had then just gone to Boston to see us, taking advantage of as fine a day as ever flattered a winter month. She arrived soon, however, and we found her also getting well and strong. Nurse Wilson was as fat and important and unintelligible as ever. I found at Cambridge your letter informing us of your safe arrival and of your winter quarters.

"I have signed my contract with Little & Brown, on the most advantageous terms. They give me a dollar per volume, and *twenty-five* presentation copies. This is even more than I hoped. We shall begin to print to-morrow I

suppose: at all events as early as next week. You will find much added in the proof-sheets to what you have already seen, and I think will find it improved. I have written a few pages in the first chapter on the subject of Entire Contracts and Severable Contracts: the distinction between which, as it seemed to me, needed some explanation. I think that a sale of the *whole* of an indefinite quantity of anything, *warranted*, at so much per *measure*, is a severable contract, and that the sole criterion is whether the consideration be entire or divisible by the terms of the contract.

"There is the great Anti-slavery Convention in full blast here at present, threatening destruction to the Constitution and everything else which does not jump with their wishes. Garrison has been emitting serpents from his mouth, like the girl in the fairy story. Red Wendell Phillips is coming down to-day upon all creation. Abby Folsom and Father Lamson have, however, worried the souls of the Abolitionists almost out by insisting upon speaking all the time in reproof of the abolition measures. This is nuts for the audience, who are not devoted to *the cause*.

"I left you just as Sumner had requested you to write a letter concerning the Convention Debate about the Salaries of the Judiciary. He has

received it, as he told me yesterday, but I fear that it will fail of much effect unless it be made public; and I see the difficulty of making it public. That one word *Retrenchment* can rouse more spirits than can be put down in a century. The proposal is, at present, with the acquiescence of the Whig party, that the salaries as to the present incumbents must be put back again, but are to be diminished as to all future judges. Ashmun of Springfield has given out among his country-people that there is not such a terrible breach of the Constitution, and has by his manner persuaded them that there is none. This is from jealousy of Boston members."

The *malaise* on the Slavery question to which I refer took, as may be seen, with the Storys, the form it was still long to keep throughout the conservative north—that of soreness under the great blot on the American scutcheon, cultivating as a counter-irritant a soreness under crude reform. It is thus impossible, in looking back on the "quiet" people of that time, not to see them as rather pitifully ground between the two millstones of the crudity of the "peculiar institution" on the one side and the crudity of impatient agitation against it on the other. *They* truly were the comfortless class—all the more that

their sacrifices, when the war at last came, were but a continuance of their discipline and were not the price of any previous joy. These things, both for the South and for the party of agitation in the North, came at least as the consequences of blissful passion and action.

*W. W. Story to Judge Story.*

"Boston, *Feb. 6th*, 1844.

"Dear Father,—I have just about three minutes to write to you in! I send you the first proof. Will you enclose it to me, instead of Little & Brown, and get an M. O. upon it? I seem to feel as if I wish to recast every sentence when I see it in print. It is like a prison to me.

"Webster's letter I have seen. it seems to be wrung out of him most reluctantly and, as it were, at the last gasp. Its egoism is offensive, and its hint that a strong man should be at the head of affairs indicates himself as the strong man.

"The Abolitionists are doing their best to ruin *this* State. They have organised a corps of lecturers who will nightly ply the abolition oar in the towns in the country. They have great hopes—and we great fears!

"The Legislature is stupid as ever, and is now talking over the constitutionality of the reduction of the Judges' salaries."

The question of the reduction of the Judges' salaries might well appear "stupid" in conditions in which public functionaries without exception were already expected, while the possession of private means to any considerable extent was infrequent, to be faithful, exemplary and happy on stipends that strike us at present as hardly larger than those of clerks in counting-houses or salesmen in shops. It was not, doubtless, that underpaid members of the high Judiciary could not maintain a character; the question was whether, on a sordid material footing, they could maintain a dignity; so that legislative movements for reduction may well have been depressing at an hour when any enlightened movement must have been for a rise. Nothing is more interesting, always, on the American scene, than the reflections induced by the constant disparity between the larger view of the measure of pecuniary need on the part of those carrying on the affairs of great States and a great country, and the comparatively uninspired imagination of the huge scattered democracy that votes the supplies and estimates the wants. No other population with personal wants so few has probably ever had so intimate a voice in the control of an administrative machine of which it was the inevitable effect positively to create

wants; so that if I speak of the spectacle as interesting, this is precisely from our being able to trace in it, step by step, what may be called the de-barbarisation of the conception of life. Wants created on one side have, by patient arts, to create on the other the imagination, not easily elastic, by which they can be met; so that what is the growth of such a faculty as that but a national, a social, a personal, an intellectual, an economic drama in itself? Such, truly, is the fascination of history! Story writes his father in this general connection a letter vivifying the matter, which I quote, in part, in this place, though it belongs to a date later in the year. The "other duties" alluded to were those of his professorship at the Harvard Law School, to which he was to give himself during the part of the year not spent at Washington, or while the Supreme Court was not sitting. He was to bring to that modestly remunerated chair all the lustre of his high judicial character; and we duly take it as a note of the time that if one of the positions was to be relinquished for the other, the natural sacrifice was held to be the seat on the Bench rather than the University lectureship.

. . . "It is rather on your account than on my mother's that I hope you will now [December

1844] renounce your judicial duties. They wear upon your constitution more than all your others, and your recompense is sour looks from one side of every case and an inadequate salary. It might be pleasant to spend one's life in the service of a country which recognised the value of the sacrifice, but in the shifting politics and declining morality of a republic nothing is long remembered, and the best are the most in the way. . . . I lately met President Quincy [Josiah Quincy, of Harvard College] in Little & Brown's bookshop, and he earnestly desired me to state to you that, in his opinion, you ought to quit your office and devote yourself to those occupations which bring you the best delight. He reiterated, concerning the salary from the Law School, that they would willingly raise the sum to three thousand dollars. I hope, however, that you will not accept of such an offer, which seems to me a mean one. Out of your name and reputation the Law School makes at least ten of its sixteen thousand dollars of income, and it can well afford, in consideration of its own wellbeing, to grant you a larger sum. Do, pray, claim a salary equivalent to your services. If you are to give anything more to the College, let it be tangible—a fund that may be credited to you. What you have given so generously heretofore is

what the Persians call 'bosh,' nothing for them, and it might as well have been aboard Captain Kyd's vessel. Resign, however, at all events, and spend a less laborious and more agreeable life."

There was no question, naturally, of a retiring life-pension; which was the greater pity—one scarce abstains from cynically remarking—as Judge Story was at this time but sixty-five years old. His span, however, was to stretch but another year; he died in his sixty-sixth, in spite of the wealth of vital endowment which it is another quaint "note" of what was then in the air that we find a passage in his son's Biography comparing, with the charming French quotation in support, to the temperament of Consuelo, George Sand's great heroine, as vividly described by that writer. Up to the time at which, shortly before his death, his emoluments at Harvard were augumented, they had not exceeded, annually, a thousand dollars. He had planned in 1843 a visit to England, which was at once to afford him the opportunity of seeing face to face some of the eminent men of that period, with whom he was in correspondence, and to give him the first considerable rest—so far as so great a recreation could be rest—that his

laborious career had known. We follow, in his son's volumes, the preparations, the *pourparlers*, for this happy consummation, and, finding ourselves, as a result of the perusal of the book, in intimate relation both with his beautiful spirit and his final fatigue, we become conscious, fairly, of a personal appetite for the experience that appears to await him, as well as of the particular impression we feel him destined to produce: so that when the project begins, for various reasons, suddenly to tremble in the balance, we almost tremble, on our own side, with suspense—we quite take it as one of the quiet tragedies of the past that so much virtue and so much honour should be doomed to fail of the just reward. The crisis barely misses a dramatic interest — the justice of the reward striking us as exquisite and our vision making for itself a picture, on the one side, of the richer London "forms," the graver London courtesies, of that time, and, on the other, of the deeper differences, the scene in proportion more furnished than peopled, that the charmed American celebrity—aware perhaps for the first time, too, of the stately face that appreciation may show in old societies—will have to recognise. All this for the moment beguiles us; we accept for him Lord Denman's and Lord Brougham's invitations to dinner, launched in advance—and

not by cable; we assist at the preparations, in Portland Place, or wherever, of the then American Minister, Mr Edward Everett, feel, even across the slower seas, the cool breath of *his* perfect propriety, and then, on the turn of the page, drop to flat disappointment. The *Britannia* sails, but Judge Story does not; the question of health, at the last moment, pricks the fond bubble, and we have to console ourselves with the thought that, given the image he presents, he is perhaps smoother and rounder just as the nature of his experience made him and just as that of his privation left him. All the same we close his record with a pang. He might have dined with Lord Brougham, "on the 26th," to meet the Lord Chancellor, Lords Denman, Campbell, Spencer, Lansdowne, Auckland and Clarendon, together with Lord Chief-Justice Tindal, Dr Lushington, Sir Frederick Pollock and Mr Austin; and with Lord Denman, on the 27th, to meet the Lord Chancellor, Lords Abinger and Brougham, Barons Parke and Alderson, Mr Justice Wightman and Sir Frederick Pollock again: he might have enjoyed these chances, and many more, of the same pleasant old heavily served sort, as heavily washed down—so that we of a later, of a cabling and rushing age, should not patronise him with our pity. Is it indeed his curiosity that we feel

unassuaged, or is it only our own? We must not at all events miss what he missed more than he missed it himself. He measures it, to Mr Everett, in thanking him for his enumeration of the guests invited to meet him, but he is brief. "I seem to myself, even at this distance, to have partaken and enjoyed their conversation and conviviality as one invited to the pleasures of the fabled feasts of the gods." And the son—which is to our point—was to make up, in the future, for much more absence than the father could, at the best, or rather at the worst, be conscious of. It was thus from a home in which the spell had been unbroken that William Story set sail.

He had meanwhile begun early, as I have said, to sacrifice, in the old phrase, to the Muses, and I find an early letter in which this is modestly signified, and which I give both on that account and as pleasantly documentary in respect to his lifelong friendship, already mentioned, with the correspondent to whom it was addressed. He had lately married and was in the flush of young happiness. The Phi Beta Kappa association of Harvard alumni hold, each year, at Commencement, a banquet to which one of their number is immemorially appointed poet, and Story, in 1844, filled this office and declaimed his poem at the close of the dinner. Worrick's was a house

of familiar entertainment at Nantasket Beach on the Massachusetts shore—then, like all shores, less conscious of such excrescences—where, during this summer, Lowell and his friend had stayed together, and some discussion and revision of the verses had taken place. These last are doubtless less to our purpose than the letter itself.

*W. W. Story to J. R. Lowell.*

"Boston, *Sept. 2nd*, 1844.

"Dear James,—I thank you most truly for your very hearty words about my Phi Beta poem. They were the most grateful that I have heard, coming as they did from one who could be so thoroughly depended upon both for sincerity and true judgment. You are the person who of all others I should wish to like it. I had many doubts concerning it, and was at one time perfectly disgusted with the whole affair. I found myself writing under the eye of the public, and I was cramped and coffined. I was writing didactically and impersonally, and felt as if I dragged a lengthening chain behind me. This was when I was at Worrick's. Then I intended to show it to you and ask your advice about it; but I thought this would be only a bore, and that if you did not like it you might thereby be thrust

into an unpleasant position. However, despite all this, I wanted sympathy and criticism, and I meant to ask it of you as soon as I completed the poem; but your departure from W.'s before its completion prevented me from so doing.

"I was well enough satisfied with my *success*, but not with my poem. Neither am I now. The subject knocked me down as often as I strove to measure myself with it. I couldn't say anything that I wanted to say. I felt everything slipping from my grasp just as I thought I had it. I had hoped before pen went to paper that I should be able to condense in some measure my feelings, but the form and circumstances continually baffled that hope, and at the end I found myself encumbered with the dead bones of my subject.

"I have been repeatedly requested to publish the thing, but I cannot make up my mind to do so—I really do not think it worth printing. I do hope, however, some of it will sink into the hearts and minds of those who heard it, for if it be stupid it is true.

"But if it is worthless, one other poem which I have is not. My child—how strange that phrase seems to me!—is a recompense for everything, a fountain of joy, ever-increasing, perennial. He is the best thing I have in life except E. He

winds himself round my heart and teaches me a new life. He is a pure satisfaction, and when you taste it for yourself, which you will, you will know its value—and also know how foolish all words are about it."

He has meanwhile (earlier in the same year) written to his father that he is modelling by night a group of Hagar and Ishmael, and has just finished a "full-sized head" of his father-in-law. And he has in the same letter written other things that glance, characteristically, at the life about him and his own life, and that express the frankness and tenderness in him of the filial attitude.

. . . "Boston has been flooded with parties this winter, and I am heartily sick of them. My book goes on very well now that it is started, but it seems as if I should never have done altering. Sumner also desired to look over the proofs, and I have most gladly consented. His hints are very valuable at times. I have omitted to write to you about Bacon's eulogium upon you; but I fear lest you are not satisfied fully that it is not fit for publication here. It is so fulsome, so inelegant and bald and undiscriminating, that I should be ashamed to see it reprinted. Here

and nowhere is it at all needed, and without injuring or benefiting you would be a mere football of criticism and banter. Foolish praise is worse than foolish blame at any time, for it involves the subject often in the ridicule due justly to the flatterer. This would not be your case, but it had, I think, most decidedly better be hushed up. Gilding refined gold and painting lilies is a useless occupation, and I wish Mr Bacon knew it; but it is well meant, and that is the best one can say of it—his style is that of a drunken Dr Johnson. And I should think that even one 'born amid the granite rocks of his native Marblehead'—where *can* one be born but in one's native place?—'and reared upon the arid sides of its declivities' could scarcely regard it with an auspicious eye."

If I am tempted to quote from one of his letters to his father during the winter of the following year, it is, I fear, mainly for the sake of the shadowy name of the person mentioned, and because this name has for me, even if in no very definite or important connection, a certain power of dim evocation. Dealing with ghosts, we must let no ghost pass who turns to us the least hint of a queer face, and cultivating, as I have said, a vanished society, we must, if only

for whimsical pity, for proper tenderness of memory, allow even the more vague of the wandering shades as much of the poor freedom of it as the more vivid. Of what "society" in particular, however, I ask myself, can have been Mr Rufus Griswold, who peeps at me out of old New York years, years of earliest boyhood, far away and as of another planet, and shows a general presence rather the reverse of prepossessing, yet strangely distinct? I seem to see him pass in and out of the house of childhood with a lurid complexion, long, dark, damp-looking hair and the tone of conciliation—unless I do him wrong. Remembrance, I find, clutches at him with an eagerness not explained by the patent facts, so that I wonder at the obsession till there suddenly breaks a light which I shall presently mention. It was one of the patent facts that, with his inflamed colour, the sharp apparition, whom I also recall as with a couple of books, from which papers protruded, always under his arm, should have been, most unfortunately, further excoriated by an explosion of gas on an occasion that I perfectly recollect hearing described; though I remain without warrant, I am well aware, for here obtruding it. I should remain without warrant indeed for any portion of my reference had I not by this time caught, for a clue, as I

have just mentioned, the thread on which these pearls are strung. Rufus Griswold, a journalist, literary critic, discoverer and monitor of poets and poetesses in the New York of that time, had been, in fine, nothing less than the friend and protector of Edgar Allan Poe—which fact, glimmering in upon my childish, yet already disquieted, consciousness, was doubtless the cause of the impression he made: an impression in which there float other images, those, even, of the "Female Poets of America," or whatever, whom Mr Griswold edited, and notably, traceably, elusively, inexplicably, that of a certain Mrs Osgood, momentarily brightest of the band, who was the friend of Griswold and also the friend of Poe, and in connection with whom there supremely swims toward me one of those queer reminiscences that take form when we sometimes succeed in looking back hard enough. I should take time—that is if it mattered—to try to remember at what festive hour of infancy, in a strange house, amid other children, amid lights and Christmas fiddles, dances, games, grab-bags and sugar-plums, I lost myself in the intenser bliss of a picture, above a sofa, on a wall, which represented a lady, in Turkish trousers, with long tresses, seated on the ground and holding a lute, whom I knew to be Mrs

Osgood and whom I was bewildered to think of as Turkish, though I recognised her as beautiful. I seem to see that she was the wife of an artist as well as the friend of poets—though these are visions that nothing would induce me to verify—and that the portrait in question may therefore have been from the husband's hand. The great thing, at any rate, was the implication, through the Christmas party, through the Turkish lady, through the literary Griswold, of the terrible, the haunting Poe, since he, in his turn, was the supreme implication, that of "The Gold-Bug," "The Black Cat," and "The Pit and the Pendulum"—sensations too early absorbed, doubtless, and too inwardly active. But I approach my simple extract by too many steps.

"Mr Rufus Griswold stopped me the other day and carried me to the Tremont House and palavered for a long time about you. The amount of his palaver was a request for me to obtain from you, or to make myself, a selection of passages from your works to be inserted in a book, which he intends to publish, called the 'Prose Writers of America'; and in which he gives extracts from all the prominent writers in the country. Somebody is to write a sketch

of your life, and he wants the dates of the different publications of your works. Besides all these things, he wishes, at some leisure time, that you would sit to some portrait-painter, either Page or Inman, in order to furnish himself with your likeness to adorn a picture-gallery of all the distinguished authors in England and America, which he has been collecting for some time past. If you will consent thereto, he (as I understood him) will have an engraving made from the portrait, which may do you some justice and may furnish the Law students with a copy if they shall desire it. Griswold has already made a collection of the Poets of America in one large volume, and another of the English Poets; and he is a professed dabbler in this sort of work, and does it well. What I want is that you would point out any particular passages which you should like to have printed, and also furnish me with the dates of your various publications. If you have anything in manuscript it will be especially desirable. To save you the trouble of dates I would suggest that Bacon (the judge of Utica), in his oration about you, has made a list which if it be correct will answer every purpose. Are the facts which he states concerning your life correct, so that I

may send a copy of the said discourse to Griswold? Let me know soon and I will communicate the same to Griswold."

I give his next letter for its personal side.

*W. W. Story to Judge Story.*

"Boston, *Feb. 3rd*, 1845.

"Dear Father,—I write to inform you that Uncle Tom and I intend to leave Boston for Washington on this day (Monday) week, and shall be much obliged to you if you will procure for us two rooms at Colman's (I think Colman keeps Gadsby's, does he not?) so that we may have them upon our arrival, which I suppose will be on Wednesday. We shall set out at 8 o'clock on Monday morning, and without delay (unless the weather be unfavourable) proceed to Washington. Uncle Tom has made me the generous offer to pay me through, and I have thought best to accept; for it is well to see Washington once in our life at least, though it be an Augean stable of politics.

"I do not know that there is anything happening here of much interest at present. I am in my old traces pulling away as usual, hearing music whenever I can hear good, eating oysters whenever I can afford it, playing whist when

I can get a chance, and thereby shaking off my evenings and driving all day at my reports and the office business. If one can call it business —for there seems to be nothing doing in this office, except the Digest of the American Reports, which is Curtis's business and scarcely mine. I might hesitate to go to Washington if there were anything to do here in the way of law; but you can imagine how much work is done when I tell you that my receipt for office profits during the last six months has been 158 dolls.—which is about enough to buy coal with. I think my chance of a *fortune* from my profession looks promising! 316 dolls. per annum is a large sum, and of course engenders a mighty enthusiasm."

Story's first visit to Italy—he sailed for Genoa —was paid in the autumn of 1847, when he had betaken himself to Europe, with his wife and child, to acquire that knowledge of the art of sculpture which was to qualify him for producing, according to the commission accepted from his fellow-citizens, a monument to his father. It strikes us certainly as characteristic enough of all the conditions that this invitation had preceded rather than followed any serious practice, on his part, of the sculptor's art: he was, obligingly, to learn the trade in order to make

the statue for which the occasion had, not less obligingly, been given him; he was not to make the statue because he had learned the trade. This latter position would not have provided for the obliging in any quarter, and we seem to feel it as in the thin local air, through which confidence and kindness so freely could circulate, that half the interest of the matter would have failed had it not been thus an affair of the general good-nature. The interest for ourselves, moreover, is the greater that the good-nature was, in the event, to be, all round, markedly justified—since the ultimate work proved quite as interesting as if the fairies who appeared so absent from its birth had been present in force. The one present fairy was the native cleverness of the young man, then disguised even from himself as an unknown quantity; the latent plastic sense, the feeling for the picturesque in attitude, for the expressive in line, for emphasised, romanticised character, in short, which was to befriend him through his after-time and make up to him in some degree for his loss of the early discipline. "Art," in the easy view of the age, was to be picked up in the favouring air—an impression that, when we come to think of it, touches us as having been natural, founded quite in apparent reason, not less than as having been

innocent. If the influence invoked was clearly, in their own air, invoked in vain, so, inevitably, the good people of the time thought of it as resident in the air that in all the world differed most from their own. There, presumably, it hung in clusters and could be eaten from the tree, so that to be free of the mystery one had but to set sail and partake. The idea was the handsomest tribute, after all, to the supposed intensity of the presence of the boon where it was present at all; and what happier state of mind could there have been than that of those pilgrims to whom the prospect so beckoned? They started surely as none others had ever done for the golden isles, and it may be doubted if in most cases they even on the spot discovered that they had simplified perhaps to excess. It was a discovery that their patrons at home were at any rate slow to make—very completely indeed as it may appear to have been made to-day. It is pleasant therefore to think of the spirit of youth, freshness, hope, with which William Story set forth; pleasant to think, that is, of all the pleasantness that, with his law-books pushed away and his charming young wife, who was ever, from that moment, to abound in the sense of his own dispositions, on his arm, he took for granted. He appears then to have taken for

granted, with the rest, that he could come back when he liked and open the law-books again; which was in fact exactly the feat that he after some months put to the test — with the still pleasanter consequences that were to have been foreseen.

Postponing, however, for a moment, our acquaintance with the series of his years in Italy, which may more conveniently be treated, even from his first interrupted connection, as one period, I embrace whatever may be to our profit in the brief remainder of his American time. Lively were his impressions on his first return, and uttered, to those to whom he *could* utter, with his habitual spontaneity; but the voice of Boston had meanwhile, in absence also, been much with him, and the voice of Boston, by the testimony of our documents, rings nowhere clearer and richer, as I have already hinted, than in those letters from Charles Sumner that my little collection happens to include. This, it should be added, without prejudice to Sumner's individual voice, always so personal, often so almost comical, essentially so natural, in spite of that note of the orator which is perceptible from the first, and precisely, in this connection, delightful, in emphasis, in abundance, for a forensic roundness and fulness. This correspond-

ent of our friend's is decidedly one of his best; and I may even justify the plea by citing another letter of the early time. The letter, however, I must premise, is addressed not to the younger (who was nineteen years old) but to the elder Story. Sumner, then in his twenty-seventh year, was, for the first time, in Europe.

*Charles Sumner to Judge Story.*

"PARIS, *May 14th*, 1838.

"'Let's talk of graves and worms and epitaphs,' says the fallen King Richard when his star of sovereignty has paled before the rising power of Bolingbroke. And I feel disposed to echo the language—I have just come in from that immense city of the dead, Père-la-Chaise. I have wandered round among its countless monuments, have read its characteristic inscriptions, and gazed on the memorials raised to genius and virtue and merit. The guide who conducted me assured me that there were more than *fifty thousand* monuments. They are as thick and close as corn that grows in the field; tomb touches tomb and monument adjoins upon monument. The eye is wearied by the constant succession; it solicits in vain the relief of a little green grass. . . . You may ask, then, how Père-la-Chaise compares with Mount Auburn. I can

answer easily. There is an interest which Père-la-Chaise possesses, which Mount Auburn has not yet acquired, and I hope long years will pass away before it can assume this melancholy crown. Everywhere in the former you see the memorial which marks the resting-place of some man whose very name causes the blood to course quickly through the veins; your eyes rest on the modest tomb of Talma, and then on the more attractive monument of Laplace, and finally on the cluster of proud erections under which repose in peace the Marshals of Napoleon. Look in any direction and you will meet some name already consecrated on the page of history. Here indeed is a source of thrilling interest; to think of treading the ground which is sown with the dust of these children of fame is enough to fill the mind; and then the eye is occupied by the various shapes which are contrived for marble. And yet as a place of mourning, to be visited by the pious steps of friends and kindred, give me our Mount Auburn, clad in the russet dress of nature, with its simple memorials scattered here and there, its beautiful paths and its overshadowing grove. Nature has done as much for Mount Auburn as man has for Père-la-Chaise, and I need not tell you how superior is the workmanship of nature. . . .

"I leave Paris with the liveliest regret, and feeling very much as when I left Boston; leaving a thousand things undone, unlearned, and unstudied which I wished to do, to learn and to study. I start for England, and how my soul leaps at the thought! Lord of my studies, my thoughts, and my dreams! There, indeed, I shall 'pluck the life of life.' Much have I enjoyed and learned at Paris; but my course has been constantly impeded by the necessity of unremitted study. The language is foreign, as were the manners, institutions, and laws. . . . I shall at once leap to the full enjoyment of all the mighty interests which England affords; I shall be able to mingle at once with its society, catch its tone and join in its conversation, attend its courts and follow all their proceedings as those at home. Here then is a pleasure which is great almost beyond comparison—greater to my mind than anything else on earth except the consciousness of doing good."

The postscript too has the full tone.

"I shall go by the way of Calais, Dover and Canterbury, see the old fortresses of Calais which have withstood so many sieges, cross the famous Straits, at Canterbury, gaze on the altar of

Thomas à Becket, and then enter that mighty babel, London."

This next from the same hand is the first of many addressed to William Story during his many years in Europe.

*Charles Sumner to W. W. Story.*

"BOSTON, *Jan. 14th*, 1848.

"I have long intended a letter to you, and was glad to hear of your pleasant voyage and happy arrival at superb Genoa. I doubt if there is any port in Europe so entirely calculated to charm and subdue a voyager fresh from the commercial newness of America. I cannot forget my delight and awe at Havre. But Genoa is more than a continent of Havres. They tell me also that you seem to enjoy what you see. That is right. Cultivate the habit. You remember Smelfungus in Sterne's 'Sentimental Journey,' who quarrelled with all he saw, and finally fell foul of the Venus in the Tribune as a very drab? But you will not be Smelfungus. . . . I think that you and E. must return soon to keep E. E. right. He is stiffening and hardening into a staunch 'Old Whig,' and talks of 'regular nominations' and voting the 'regular ticket.' He seems to be inspired with an exalted idea of a combination

to which I am entirely indifferent, the 'united Whig party.' Like Mr Webster, he sees no star in the heavens but Whiggery. What a dark place this would be if there were no other lights. . . . Tidings come constantly of Emerson's successes in England. An article in 'Blackwood' and a very elaborate criticism in the 'Revue des Deux Mondes' place him with Montaigne."

# EARLY ROMAN YEARS

## III.

### THE SIEGE OF ROME.

STORY and his wife were meanwhile launched in the old Rome of the old order, the Rome of which the rough hand of history has so grievously deprived the merely modern pilgrim, but which to those still able to cherish, from years now distant, some memory of the comparatively inviolate scene, shows, in the light of their youth, a face inexpressibly romantic. I can remember but the last winter before the deluge, and only a portion of that; but it was at this time that, as if foreknowing the great assault to be suffered and the great change to be wrought, the sorceress of the seven hills gathered herself up, for her last appearance, her last performance, as it were, in her far-spreading, far-shining mantle. The Œcumenical Council of 1869, whatever other high matters it settled or failed to settle, was the making at least of a perpetual many-coloured picture—the vast, rich canvas in which Italian

unity was, as we may say, to punch a hole that has never been repaired. The hole to-day in Rome is bigger than almost anything else we see, and the main good fortune of our predecessors in general was just in their unconsciousness of any blank space. The canvas then was crowded, the old-world presence intact. The French siege of 1849, indeed, was the first public event at which our special friends were to assist, but that was an episode followed by a reaction only too markedly in the sense of colour; besides which, as the Papacy was then not, as at present, ostensibly patient, but frankly militant, the drama filled the stage instead of going on, as we see it, behind the scenes. Our only gain, for the senses—putting aside the question of the gain, in each case, for the mind—is that the Pagan world has begun to bristle in proportion as the Christian has given ground. If there are fewer feasts of the Church—practically, that is, through curtailment and effacement; if the most ceremonial institution in the world has muffled itself in grey, there is, on the other hand, more of the recovered treasure of antiquity, a greater energy of excavation, a larger exploitation of that vast profane reliquary the packed and accumulated soil. The saints, the processions, the cardinals, all the Catholic pomp, have retired from the

foreground, but the gods of Greece and of Rome, the statues of the heroes, the fragments of the temples, the rutted slabs of the old pavements, do what they can to occupy it, sharing it indeed with the polyglot people of the hotels, who, from year to year, are the steadily rising tide. The day is at hand, to all appearance, when it will be idle to talk of any foreground not constituted primarily by the Americans, the English, the Germans, made scarcely less alien by an admixture of Italian militarism; a menace the sharper, moreover, as any contingent is always free to ask when in the world Rome has *not* been a winter watering-place. Half the charm of the time we reach back to is in the fact that our friends of that time likewise, in their innocence, so viewed it; and we are doubtless rather arbitrary in preferring their innocence to ours. Since the question, however, is not so much of their merit as of their luck, we feel our discrimination not invidious.

I find much of the romance even in the scrappiest jottings in ink and pencil, the abbreviated memoranda, the snatches of small heart-breaking arithmetic, the suggested signs and sketches, of little old note-books, pocket *carnets* bought on the road but still lighting a little the old path, the old curiosities and felicities. They

were in Florence, the young Bostonians, between their arrival at Genoa and their advance upon Rome early in 1848, and it was during these few weeks that, making the acquaintance of Robert Browning and his wife, domiciled by the Arno (first at Pisa) from the previous autumn, but not for some months yet to be established at Casa Guidi, they laid the foundation of the most interesting friendship of their lives. Story, in the first flush of those perceptions and initiations that regularly, for each of us, as we feel Italian soil beneath our feet, promise to be infinite and, for our individual development, epoch-making—Story abounds in descriptions of pictures, statues, museums, churches, and in enthusiasms, opinions, disappointments, all the earnest discriminations and ingenuous conclusions with which, inevitably and blissfully, often funnily enough, his sense of the general revelation was to be worked off. We like, in faded records, the very mistakes of taste, for they are what seems to bring us nearest to manners, and manners are, changing or unchanging, always most the peopled *scene*, the document to be consulted, the presented image and beguiling subject. He goes to the Pitti Palace every day, and responds, in his eagerness, to every work on its walls. I like to look over his shoulder, not because his judgments are rare—

for that, in him, for himself at least, would waste time — but because they are delightedly usual. "Allori's Judith. This is the true original; a fine sleepy-eyed, dark Jewish face, rich in colour; yellow figured robes with white sleeves and white mantle tied round the waist. A fine handsome face, but no Judith." He was himself, later on, to give the Judith he thought true; in prospect of which, and of his monument to his father, he indites a long note on Serravezza marble, through which, as with a sense of something pleasantly pathetic, we feel the state of eager amateurishness to glimmer. It is the first witnessed breath of his long marmorean adventure. "You must examine with all your eyes every inch of all the surfaces for flaws, holding your hand so as to regulate the light, for sometimes, especially in sunlight, the glare is such that unless moderated it may deceive you." And he puts down "178 francesconi, the price of a block of Maremma marble for my statue." He puts down prices, of other matters, deliciously low; which is what I just meant by his heart-breaking arithmetic. It is above all the terms on which the Italy of the old order was so amply enjoyable that make us feel to-day shut out from a paradise. Out of one of the books falls a little pale exotic card of 1847 —"F. Antonio Sasso. Pittore al Olio e all'

Acquerelle, Negoziante di Quadri e di Mobilia Antica"—which evokes visions of bargains never to be recovered. Oh, for an hour, in the old Florentine street, of F. Antonio Sasso! *Sasso*, as we know, means a rock, but we feel the rock soften under pressure. We seem to see the good man arrive at the inn with a cinque-cento *cassone* on his back. When they travel they pay in pauls, and in admirably few; it reaches its climax at the hotel at Pisa, where Story notes *one* as bestowed upon "the man who ran somewhere." These charms are mixed, on the little pencilled page, with the verses that always flowed from him clearly and freely — verses mainly elegiac, with droll *charges* of Medici busts in Florence (say the portentous nose's end and underhung lip, like the semicircular basin beneath a water-tap, of Cosmo II.)

Mrs Story found in Rome, this and the following winter, the friend of Boston days, Margaret Fuller, whose incongruous marriage, at first, as would seem, rather awkwardly occult, had not yet offered her to the world, perhaps more awkwardly still, as Madame Ossoli; who, further, had secured and prepared apartments, and who, by this time, as a comparatively expert Roman, had, in addition to everything else, the value of a guide and introducer. At "everything

else," in this lady, it would also be interesting to glance; so that, space permitting, we must not fail of the occasion. Among the ghosts, as I have called them, of the little related, vanished world, none looks out at us more directly and wistfully. It was particularly during the second winter, in presence of the lamentable events of 1849, that she lived with most zest her short hour; as indeed it is with these later months that the light notes before me are most concerned. It appears to have been but by degrees that the Storys accepted the inevitability of Rome rather than Florence, for though they remained there through their first spring, their return, on the next occasion, was delayed to the end of the following February, after an autumn spent again in the little Tuscan treasure-city. The fullest compendium of primary impressions is in a single spring-time letter, which naturally reflects, more than anything else, the *obvious* of the traveller's view, but reflects it with all the writer's talkative emphasis.

*W. W. Story to J. R. Lowell.*

"Rome, *April 28th*, 1848.

"Dear James,—To-night, when the Girandola should be, and is not, on account of rain, despite

utter fatigue of various kinds and a general stupidity, I cannot help answering your letter. . . . If I could sit down with you for an evening and talk freely there are a many things, which I could tell you, of some interest; but on paper I can do nothing. There is here as much humbug as anywhere in the world, and if you come here you will enjoy laughing at your fellow-creatures to your heart's content. All this week, for instance, has been a series of the most consummate humbugs that it has been my fortune to witness. Holy Week it has been, and all sorts of ceremonies have been going on, most of them senseless and superstitious, with a penny-worth of religion to a ton of form. I have heroically done up the week, after crowding, pushing, sweating and toiling day by day, and save some one or two things the result has been 'bosh.' I have seen the Pope wash the feet of twelve fellows in white foolscaps, and at peril of my life have obtained over the heads of a garlic-smelling, fetid crowd a sight of the same august person serving at the apostles' table twelve fat fellows who eat away like mad and were the only people in the room who at all enjoyed the affair. It was with difficulty that the Pope himself could keep his countenance while he was performing this solemn farce, and every now and

then a grim smile would wrinkle up his features despite his best endeavours. Then again I have seen the washing of the pilgrims' feet at the Trinità dei Pellegrini, the pilgrims being without exception the rummest set of customers I ever saw, stupid, dirty and bestial in their appearance. . . . A crowd is always bad enough, but an Italian crowd is of all the very worst. Such smells as are not to be imagined; asafœtida is as Lubin's choicest perfume compared with exhalations fit to strike a strong man down. And amid this sweetness I have spent the better part of the last seven days. Some things there have been beautiful and appealing. To hear Allegri's Miserere in the Sistine Chapel with the awful and mighty figures of Michael Angelo looking down on one from the ceiling, to hear Guglielmi's Miserere in St Peter's while the gloom of evening was gathering in the lofty aisles and shrouding the frescoed domes, was no humbug, but a deeply affecting and solemnly beautiful experience. Never can one forget the plaintive wailing of the voices that seemed to float in the air and to implore pity and pardon. Then, again, in the illumination of St Peter's the architecture seemed as if traced by a pencil of fire in the blue dark firmament. First it looked like a dream, when it was covered with the lanterns

—the whole body of the church being lost and only the lines of light gleaming along the outlines and ribs and cornices. Then when the second illumination came it was like a huge jewelled tiara, the gems of which glittered in the air. Bah! how can one give any idea of such a spectacle? Imagine a swarm of enormous *cuculli* gathering round the dome, or the stars falling like a snow of fire and lodging in every nook, or recall every brilliant and magical and fantastic image that your dreams have ever given you, and describe it for yourself. These things were worth seeing and cannot be forgotten. Browning and his wife are now in Florence; Ida Hahn-Hahn is in Naples, and we shall see her, I hope. I am now thinking of going there, but as the time draws near I hate the more to leave Rome, so utterly exhaustless is it, and so strongly have I become attached to it. How shall I ever again endure the restraint and bondage of Boston? Still there are a great many things there which Italy has not and which are great and good! There is life, and thought, and progress of ideas, and political liberty!"

And I cannot do better than place here the letter his correspondent had addressed him a few weeks earlier. The joke of it is prolonged,

but not beyond felicity. Miss F., with whom the writer couldn't away — a significant mark for Miss F — was of course Margaret Fuller.

*J. R. Lowell to W. W. Story.*

"ELMWOOD, *March 10th*, 1848.

"MY DEAR WILLIAM,—I begin with a cheerful confidence as near the top of the page as I can, trusting that Providence will somehow lead me through my three pages to a triumphant 'yours truly' at the end. Emelyn writes in good spirits, but I cannot help suspecting a flaw somewhere. There must be not a little of the desolate island where S. M. F. is considered agreeable. It is hardly possible that pure happiness should exist so far from Cambridge. One needs not to go as far as Rome to find an attic, nor should I prefer an Italian clime to an American one. As for ruins, you have there, to be sure, plenty of them, the work of [undecipherable] and Goths and other people with whom you have nothing whatever to do. But here we have an excellent ruin on Mount Benedict which we made ourselves. And, if you mention political changes, Italy has been getting herself born again ever since I can remember, and will have to be delivered by a Cæsarian operation after all. Besides, have not we ours?

It is not a week since Sidney Willard was elected to our Cantabrigian Mayor's nest in place of James D. Green. Mr B. has been dismissed from the office as field-driver. We have two watchmen, who, I have no doubt, could put to flight the Pope's whole civic guard. Deacon Brown has retired from business. Will not all these things be as important to the interests of mankind a hundred years hence as that Noodle VI. sits on the throne of the two Sicilies or Loafer XXI. in the grand-ducal chair of Florence? If you have your Pio Nonos, we can also boast our Tommy Nonose also, whom I meet every time I go to the Athenæum.

"Emelyn talks of roses in blossom. For my part I think them no better out of season than green peas. I could never enter fully into these thermometrical and meteorological satisfactions. Have you had three weeks' sleighing? Have you had the thermometer at 14 below zero? Have you stored twenty thousand tuns of ice? I presume you have not even so much as an ice-sickle to reap such a crop with. But I will not triumph, seeing that these are things in which I had no hand, and it is not your fault that you have no winter. We are not without our roses either, and the growth of the open air too. You should see them in Maria's cheeks—

roses without a thorn, as St Basil supposes them to have been in Eden. . . . I confess I never had any great opinion of the ancient Romans. They stole everything. They stole the land they built the Eternal City on, to begin with. Then they stole their wives, then their religion, then their art. They never invented more than one god of any consequence, as far as I know, and he was a two-faced one, an emblem of the treacherous disposition of the people. Niebuhr has proved that they made up the only parts of their history that are creditable to them. . . . You may depend upon it that Americans will be objects of suspicion there if there be any outbreak of revolution. There are no warnings round the streets, as in decent communities where a Christian tongue is spoken, to 'Stick no Bills here,' and you will doubtless be singled out as an early victim. My advice to you is to come directly home as soon as you receive this. I have it on good authority that the Austrian Government has its eye on Miss F. It would be a pity to have so much worth and genius shut up for life in Spielberg. Her beauty might perhaps save her. Pio Nono also regards her with a naturally jealous eye, fearing that the College of Cardinals may make her the successor of Pope Joan.

"Mr Wetmore, I suppose, will bring you all the news, and I do not know anything to tell you except what he would not be likely to mention. Mr Palfrey has been shot in a duel with Mr Winthrop, and I have been elected to his seat in Congress. It is expected by my constituents that I should shoot Mr Winthrop, and I am accordingly practising every day with blank cartridges. Longfellow has written a poem which Sumner and Felton do *not* think superior to Milton. I have written one which has been popular. The American Eagle is anxiously awaiting the return of Miss F., whom he persists in regarding as the genius of Columbia. A public dinner is to be given her in Boston at which the Bird of our Country will preside. . . . Page has captivated all the snobs by the urbanity of his manners, and is fast making his fortune. To-day J. Q. Adams's body is received in Boston with great pomp. I am sorry that I cannot send you a programme of the procession, that you might show the Romans we can do a thing or two. The 'Eastern magnificence' of the theatres is nothing to it. The corpse will be followed by one consistent politician (if he can be found) as chief mourner. The procession will consist wholly of what the newspapers call 'unmingled' patriots, and will of course be very

large. I have sent in a bale of moral pocket-handkerchiefs for the mourners and for wads to the cannon. The anti-slavery feeling of New England will bring up the rear of the cortége in a single carriage. There will be present on the occasion forty last survivors of the Boston Tea-party, and fifty thousand who were in the battle of Bunker's Hill. But it occurs to me that there may possibly be some kind of humbug in Rome also; so I will leave this part of my discourse and ask you what you do for cigars? I know that the Virginian nepenthe is so much esteemed there that one of the popular oaths is 'per Bacco!' but it does not follow that the plant is any better for being deified. I know that Vesuvius smokes, but do the people generally?"

The flight of Pius IX. to Gaeta and the establishment of the Roman Republic had marked the year of revolutions, for though these events belong to February 1849, it was the high political temperature of the previous months that had made them possible. When our friends reached the scene, for their second visit, a few weeks later, apparent order prevailed; but this was not long to last, and their predominant interests and emotions soon enough found a centre in that most incoherent birth of the time, the

advance of French troops for the restoration of the Pope, the battle waged against the short-lived "popular government" of Rome by the scarce longer-lived popular government of Paris. It was at this battle that foreign visitors "assisted," as in an opera-box, from anxious Pincian windows, and the brief diaries of Story and his wife give us still the feeling of the siege. They arrive in time to place themselves well, as it were, for the drama, to get seated and settled before it begins, and were afterwards, doubtless, with whatever memories of alarm or discomfort, to love their old Rome better, or at least know her better, for having seen her at one of the characteristically acute moments of her long-troubled life. The flight of the Pontiff, the tocsin and the cannon, the invading army, the wounded and dying, the wild rumours, the flaring nights, the battered walls, were all so much grist to the mill of an artistic, a poetic nature, curious of character, history, aspects. From their arrival, March 2nd, at the Hôtel d'Angleterre, the moment was full of illustration. Their felicity in this was greater than the comparatively small one with which, in years to come, after alighting, for the first time, at the same threshold, the writer of these lines, though gratefully enough indeed, had to content himself. I

remember of what good omen it seemed to me, and how quite the highest possible note, that, in 1869, touching the sacred soil at the end of the old night-journey from Florence, then interminable and almost obligatory, I hurried out heedless of breakfast and open-mouthed only for visions; which promptitude was as promptly rewarded, on the adjacent edge of Via Condotti, by the brightest and strangest of all, the vista of the street suddenly cleared by mounted, galloping, hand-waving guards, and then, while every one uncovered and women dropped on their knees, jerking down their children, the great rumbling, black-horsed coach of the Pope, so capacious that the august personage within— a hand of automatic benediction, a large, handsome, pale old face, a pair of celebrated eyes which one took, on trust, for sinister — could show from it as enshrined in the dim depths of a chapel.

I continue first, for a moment, however, to weave matter for retrospective envy from the indications of Story's second Florentine autumn; making as I do, I fear, a positive fetish of the fancy out of the image of that precious little city as it might have been lived in and loved before its modern misfortunes. I find I can live in it again with any old ghost whatever who

will so much as hold out a finger. The adventures may be small, the gossip not great; but the precursors, as I have called them, muster in force, flitting across the page and catching the tender light. The page here, for instance, is Mrs Story's, who journalises with spirit. "In January one evening came the Cranches, and we sat over the fire and told stories, escaping, I believe, all dangerous topics, such as homœopathy and the respective attractions of New York and Boston. One longs for the "stories" that circulated in this conscious avoidance, and wonders whether they made them up as they went along, or plucked them, by the Florentine fire, as fine flowers of experience. The special experience of the Cranches, that comes back to me from later, from Parisian and other days, on lines of its own, bringing with it the conception of the somewhat melancholy blossom it might have yielded. Memory turns to *them*, indeed, as to precursors of the purest water, whose portion was ever to tread the path rather than to arrive at the goal. Christopher Pearse Cranch, painter, poet, musician, mild and melancholy humourist, produced pictures that the American traveller sometimes acquired and left verses that the American compiler sometimes includes. Pictures and verses had alike, in any case, the mark of his great, his

refined personal modesty; it was not in them at least, for good or for ill, to emphasise or insist. That was naturally—as always in such connections—much more the part of his graceful and clever companion, who would have painted, played and written with more effect than he, had her hand been formed for the various implements. There were those, in the general company we are considering (as one now imagines or recalls them), who didn't "go home," and there were those who did; there were those who wouldn't even if they could, and there were those who couldn't even if they would. Each of these classes still shines for me, thus late in the day, with its special coloured light, but the light that is softest and kindest, that most poetically veils all plain particulars, hangs over the group last mentioned. Some were not to come home, we make out, till after death; they must have done so—those who had most wanted it—then. The Cranches came before, well before; which gave them but the longer time to be sorry. Then they could sit by New England fires and tell stories, *not* made up, to good purpose. For there were precursors, in those days, in the path of regret, one might even say of repentance, quite as in the path of curiosity and cheer. There were experiments, all round, in every kind of

nostalgia, and those only, I daresay, who quite escaped the disease were those who either never "went" at all, or never came back.

Mrs Story, at all events, quits her friends to repair, for some occasion, to Piazza Maria Antonia —which again is a trifle that I respond to with a thrill. Which of the new baptisms now covers that sweeter identity? Not, indeed, that I would for the world have the question answered —leaving its pictorial virtue simply as a question while we pass, an inexpensive tribute to the good Grand Duke. The whole scene hangs together —which is the pleasantness; everything is in keeping with a proper honour to good Grand Duchesses. Old Mrs Trollope, seeking a contrast, in a villa at Bellosguardo, from those Domestic Manners of the Americans which she had not long before so luridly commemorated, comes, indulgently, to call; after which our friends attend "skaiting" on the ice outside one of the gates. They do the most usual things —except for the skating—and it is not our fault if, after all, these should affect us, absurdly, as the most desirable. Never was the spell of desire less elaborately produced. They go to the Pergola Theatre, to a concert "for the benefit of the Venetians." Which of us, in Florence, at that time, wouldn't have done anything, with

passion, for the benefit of the Venetians? "The Barbiere sung, the crowd enormous, with a staring man in front of us, and Rossini enthusiastically called forth." Story meanwhile has of course a studio, where he is modelling hard, and his wife, sitting with him as he works, reads aloud Monckton Milnes's Life of Keats, lent by Browning. They go to the Pergola again and, during the ballet, make a sortie to F. B.'s rooms and have time to sup and come back to the theatre before the opera begins again. Happy days, happy nights, happy F. B., above all, thus gallantly entertaining, and whose benignant identity—earliest of all precursors, most grand-ducal of Florentines, and still [1] living in honoured and cherished age—it is all I can do to resist the impulse to unveil. If I succeed at all, just here, it is by reason of the great incident, on this same occasion, of the sudden reappearance of Frank Heath, of whom we shall hear more, who multiplies my Franks, and yet to whom, as he is more thrust upon me, though I happen to know little about him, I cannot deny room. Neither indeed, on the other hand, I must add, can I to any extent offer it, since prompt reflection warns me off the subject. I could track Frank Heath—I find myself quite yearning to

[1] 1903.

do it; but I let him pass (with the mild light of accident in which, as I say, we shall yet see him) lest, precisely, he should too much beckon us on. I could track him, for instance, with the aid of F. B., rich in that order of information, and who is enviably sure to have known him; and if I stay my hand it is not from fear of disappointment. It is from the sense, to be perfectly candid, that I am in danger, as it is, of starting but too many hares, and of their perhaps being pronounced, after all, inconsiderable game. I find one, at all events, in every bush, seeming to hear them rise with each turn of my small bescribbled leaves.

Mrs Story drives daily, for her pleasure, in the Cascine and elsewhere, with "kind Mrs Greenough," whom we should have thought of, for genial convenience, in Florence at least, as the wife of the *other* sculptor. The Americans of the profession were already several; yet of how many, even in Rome, at that time, were we to come to speak as the "others"? There were the names that one was brought up to—one of which, for reasons I now wonder at, but do not quite seize, was not that of Powers, and this in spite of the Greek Slave, so undressed, yet so refined, even so pensive, in sugar-white alabaster, exposed under little domed glass covers in such American homes

as could bring themselves to think such things right. Crawford, in Rome, who was to transmit his name to so distinguished an association in another art, was essentially, on the spot, one of the others; but Crawford was, tragically, to die young, and, as Greenough was to do the same, the period of the two "others" was practically over, for Rome, by the time Story came to the front. There were, in a sense, numerous others, as I say, of both sexes—most of all, at one time, surprisingly, not of the sex of Phidias. Horatio Greenough, as I read the story, was at that time, at the invitation of the Washington Government, adding to monumental work already supplied to the Capitol. No group more than that of the Greenoughs, in any case—for they too were several—falls into step with our procession; lovers of all the arts, and of Italy, all of them; such persistent Florentines, in fact, that old houses by the Arno, old villas on the cypress-planted hills above it, are still haunted with their name. If we start another hare—one at the very least—when, in these weeks, Mrs Story goes to Casa Guidi to lend Mrs Browning her copy of "Jane Eyre," we feel that the game is on this occasion, all round, large enough. We also feel, with philosophic detachment at this time of day, that the volume, almost certainly of the American pirated

form, would have been contained in one of the parcels arriving from Boston "per *Nautilus*," the blessed little New England sailing-ship of the time before tariffs, which, coming straight to Leghorn, makes our friends, as they note, feel nearer "home" than anything had yet done. But they were well away from home again, we must assume, when, according to Mrs Story, they "went to Mrs Trollope's to see the fancy dresses for the ball at Sir George Hamilton's. A strange show of the shell without the soul to animate it —a dull, heavy set of people enough!" They were not less so, obviously, when, at the Cocomero Theatre, with Frank Heath and Frank Boott — the latter name *will* out! — they see Ristori "in a thrilling play of Scribe's." They were always seeing Ristori, the Ristori of the rich and various early period and of the yet merely local reputation, and seeing her as youth and gaiety and happy comradeship see. The play of Scribe's, in this golden light, was "thrilling," and we wonder, in the age of criticism, which it was. It could only have been, I surmise, "Adrienne Lecouvreur," shortly before produced in Paris. There were other occasions when the play, "written by a Genoese, was miserable, but Ristori's acting very fine." Who of us wouldn't have faced the miserable play to see the *young*

Ristori?—who must have been, in the pride of her prime, a personality, as we nowadays say, quite by herself. "Written by a Genoese" has, moreover, a suspicious sound — perhaps it was only the grand Tuscan contempt, so easy, in Florence, to imbibe. The day was at any rate then distant (as it is now, alas! distant again) when another imbiber, on the same spot, now speaking for himself, was to see the great actress, even then no longer young—*altro!*—offer, on a wintry night, Mme. de Girardin's irrevivable "Lady Tartuffe," with supreme "authority," to some fifteen spectators.

That the year was, at the end of 1848 and the beginning of 1849, still that of revolutions was apparent enough, in a quasi-comfortable, semi-sociable fashion, even in the streets of Florence, where the beating of the *generale*, the ringing of bells, the prevalence of "confusion," the making, in short, of history didn't prevent repeated visits to the Cocomero and then "supper, after much seeking, at a *trattoria* in Via Vaccasecca." We enjoy with them, to this hour, the much seeking; we take from them, if we have a glimmer of fancy, the dim little image of their hunting up their little refreshment together, a company of laughing artists, of hungry exiles, of women young and charming, through

the old Florentine streets, where the lighting, as well as almost everything else, was still scarce more than medieval. The confusion of the days indeed overflowed a little, on occasion, into the evenings, for it befalls them to see "a stupid tragedy, which was finally hissed down." It would have been interesting to see, even amid civic strife, the Ristori—if it *was* she—finally hissed down. There were at other times other lurid things—"The 'Duchesse de Praslin' was acted. It was awful." The Duc de Praslin—if our generation be oblivious—had done his wife to death with knives, in her bedroom of the Faubourg Saint-Honoré, and we were, in America, even to the listening ears of tender childhood, talking it over the more generally from the fact that an innocent witness of the drama, a lady domiciled with the tragic pair, fleeing after the trial and the catastrophe, the murderer's suicide in prison, from the great horror, had lately taken refuge among us. Admirable surely, for appreciative näiveté, that prompt theatric sense of the monstrous actual, among the Italians, which leads them to clap upon the stage, with abounding facility and, as we see, "awful" effect, the leading crimes of the hour.

There was always meanwhile, nearer home, plenty of contemporary history. "In the after-

noon we went to San Miniato, but were obliged to climb upon the wall to look upon the city, not being allowed to enter the fortress on account of the Revolution." Delightful Revolution, which, we seem to see, promoted afternoon drives and friendly parleys; promoted the sweetness of the little treasure-city as seen, from above, nestling in her cup of hills; promoted again, at night, the indispensable Cocomero, where the great Modena, master of our Salvini, was admirable as Luigi Undici. Leghorn was in mild revolt, as to which Mrs Browning had written to Miss Mitford from Casa Guidi in October: "The child's play between the Livornese and our Grand Duke provokes a thousand pleasantries. Every now and then a day is fixed for a revolution in Tuscany, but up to the present time a shower has come and put it off. Two Sundays ago Florence was to have been 'sacked' by Leghorn, when a drizzle came and saved us." Mrs Browning thirsted for great events, but the Storys were less strenuous and took things as they came. The weather, in any case, with the turn of the year, had been finer, for Florence had by that time put down her foot on the question of a Constitution. She has her Constitution now to her heart's content. Story and his wife prepared, late in

February, to leave her very unsuccessfully getting it, but they had before their departure for Rome, on the 20th of the month, "a long quiet evening with the Brownings." As to this impression Mrs Story, for the moment, does not otherwise journalise; but she startles us a little by overflowing, in however few words, in another connection. They had been leaving cards of farewell at various houses and "considered that we had done our duty by Florentine society—which strikes us as worth very little consideration. Vulgar and ignorant people." We should write history, we should read it, but ill if we didn't yearningly wonder what people in particular she meant. For we drop of a sudden from the golden dream. Were there vulgar and ignorant people anywhere, were there, most of all, such there, even *then?* However, the touch is a discrimination, and discrimination—which is nothing but curiosity on the way to satisfaction—is the breath of history. History continues to sweep our friends along; they go to Leghorn by rail on February 23rd, and, starting at three o'clock in the afternoon, arrive by half-past six; which was by no means bad for grand-ducal antiquity —was indeed quite as good as to-day. It is a point over which history seems for the instant

to pause, and the paternal, the patriarchal potentate expelled by too rash a population to give us, from among the shades, a reproachful, pathetic look. Yet it is only for the moment; the Muse, jerking us on by the hand we grasp, tosses an uncompromising head. Against Leghorn, afresh, we are invited to discriminate; against Leghorn, where we read of "a long stupid walk. The weather glorious, like summer; but the people here, even in their festa-day attire, look like pickpockets, knaves and fools. The women *mere* fools." The hotel and their quarters are bad; everything fails. "No boat! no books! no fire! And very little dinner. No prospect of relief from this purgatorial environment." Relief comes, however, they thank the Fates, who send along on March 1st a French mail-steamer for Civita Vecchia—their "third visit to this interesting port." After which: "Rome, Rome, Rome! The dome of St Peter's is again actually before us, a fairer vision on this second than on our first seeing. How true a joy as we drove through the gates!"

Margaret Fuller, again, on the morrow, joins them in a search for rooms, and they are established that evening in quarters in the Porta Pinciana—the steep, the amiable, the so famil-

iarly Roman Porta Pinciana of the old days, where at present ghosts again hover, but where, anciently, the models, all beauty and costume, all varnished eyes and daggered hair and swathed legs and peaked hats, all attuned to the good old romantic note, clustered thick, and the staircases, on which you brushed by them as you went and they gloomed at you for a painter indifferent to their merits, opened upon who can say at this time what scraps of Roman view, what glimpses of yellow loggia, what patches of morning sunshine and of perfect Pincian blue? Our friends breakfast immediately with the Crawfords at Villa Negroni, where the irrepressible Margaret again joins them. What has become of Villa Negroni, dim, denied, engulfed, more or less, to a certainty now, but where three small inhabitants, dedicated each, by the admirable scene itself, as we make out, to distinction, grew up, or at least began to, and laid up memories? Nothing will induce me, however, to insist on an answer to my question; one must never, in Rome at this hour, for penalties and pangs, insist on such answers. There were two little girls of the villa, and there was one brought to play, and *she* remembers well how they picked up bitter oranges in the alleys to pelt each other with. Thirty years ago, and later, in any case,

the place was there still, but with that indescribable golden air about it (according to my faded impression) of a paradise closed and idle, where the petals of the Roman roses in the spring, all ungathered, might be thick on the Roman walks, where happiness unmistakably *had* been. Mrs Story makes on March 11th the prettiest little entry. "To walk with William and Frank [Heath] round the Prætorian Camp—after having had the usual difficulty in determining where to go. Thence to a grassy hillside, whence W. made a sketch of old Rome as seen through an ivied arch; and afterwards to St John Lateran, where we walked about the church and went into the vault under the Corsini Chapel. Coming home by the Coliseum we met the Crawfords. Oh, golden day!" She goes on the next "with Mrs Crawford to buy Roman scarfs in Piazza Madama." Roman scarfs, and in Piazza Madama —exactly the right place: it is as if they had done it on purpose that we should, at the end of time, find it quaint, archaic, delightfully *vieux jeu* and of a touching good faith.

What completes it, however, is the sequel, than which nothing could be more in the right note. "After which tea at the Cropseys', with a Pulcinello representation" by two of the gentlemen present. History has these inventions,

which fiction tries for and misses. For who indeed are ghosts, however thin, if not, precisely, the Cropseys?—thin, thin, and yet once thick enough, as thick as the luscious paint itself on those canvases, all autumnal scarlet, amber, orange, which were not the least of the glories of the "Hudson River school." That was an age in which American artists yielded to the natural impulse to paint American scenery—when they didn't paint Roman, and when no subject for landscape art was deemed superior to the admirable native "fall." The only question is of what the Cropseys can have been doing by the bare banks of Tiber; true as it yet may be that even in such presences the kindly old traffic in American effects drew support from the frequent nostalgia of the American absentee. Certain it is, however, that, on the evening in question, with Pulcinello and Roman tea, the Cropseys had every reason *not* to foresee a strange time when their country would bristle, to the exclusion of almost everything else, with pictures of little flat fields, little stiff poplars, little grey skies, the little homely, sober facts of France, products of a palette not to be recognised by any Cropsey *as* a palette. The vivid native palette, prepared for so ample a range, where were they to see it hung up, and, above all, *why*

were they? If the answer belongs to the history of taste, that makes this history (what it has always been) but the more thrilling. To live over people's lives is nothing unless we live over their perceptions, live over the growth, the change, the varying intensity of the same—since it was *by* these things they themselves lived. When and how, therefore, did the generations perceive that the Cropseys, generically speaking, wouldn't do? When and how, still more, did they begin to perceive that the Hudson River wouldn't, and doesn't?—that is if it be indeed true that the discovery has been made. The appearance rests upon every one's behaving as if it had. The fond inquiry would be (in the interest, as I say, of living over people's perceptions) as to how such things take place, as to how such dramas, as it were, with all the staked beliefs, invested hopes, throbbing human intensities they involve in ruin, enact themselves. Only this, really, is starting too great a hare; and all we need feel is that, for the moment, in the little circle of easy artistry and sociability, both abroad and at home, the complication had yet not come.

It suffices that there are no complications, none at least obvious, in the scene before us, which is all friendly Campagna sunshine and Pincian

candlelight, intermixed indeed always, with the smoky theatric lamp; no false note, I mean, but the growing, yet not importunate, political. Our friends are under the Republic, but they have other things to think of; unless, say, when they go to the Chamber of Deputies to hear Mazzini speak. They do the regular old pleasant things in the regular old confident ways; at the Rospigliosi Casino first, to see Guido's "Aurora," and then to the Barberini Palace, unconscious as yet of their eventual long installation there, to guess the strange riddle that the Cenci asks over her shoulder. On the evening of this occasion, at the Argentina, they listened, with Margaret and her Ossoli, to "Beatrice di Tenda." They had pleasures, provably, that we have lost. "Beatrice di Tenda" is never offered us, and no more, with any assurance, in the coved and gilded ceiling, are the fair academic Sun-god and the academic parti-coloured Hours. The Cenci of course—the other Beatrice—has, as an occasion for melting moments, been positively removed from the feast; with the added objection for us of our having to know that our prolonged sentimental consumption of the tenderest morsel, as we have mostly felt it, in all pictorial portraiture was, all the while, the act of eating (to maintain my metaphor) one thing for another. We suc-

ceed to generations replete with Guido's tearful turbaned parricide, but are ourselves never honestly to taste of her more, inasmuch as, tearful and turbaned as she is, she is proved, perversely, *not* a parricide, or at least not the one we were, in tourist's parlance, "after." These, fortunately, were disconcertments not dreamed of when, for instance, on March 24th, our kindly diarist "went home with Margaret and sat with her in her quiet little upper chamber all the evening. W. came for me, and we stayed until a late hour of the night." The unquestionably haunting Margaret-ghost, looking out from her quiet little upper chamber at her lamentable doom, would perhaps be never so much to be caught by us as on some such occasion as this. What comes up is the wonderment of *why* she may, to any such degree, be felt as haunting; together with other wonderments that brush us unless we give them the go-by. It is not for this latter end that we are thus engaged at all; so that, making the most of it, we ask ourselves how, possibly, in our own luminous age, she would have affected us on the stage of the "world," or as a candidate, if so we may put it, for the cosmopolite crown. It matters only for the amusement of evocation — since she left nothing behind her, her written utterance being

naught; but to what would she have corresponded, have "rhymed," under categories actually known to us? Would she, in other words, with her appetite for ideas and her genius for conversation, have struck us but as a somewhat formidable bore, one of the worst kind, a culture-seeker without a sense of proportion, or, on the contrary, have affected us as a really attaching, a possibly picturesque New England Corinne?

Such speculations are, however, perhaps too idle; the *facts* of the appearance of this singular woman, who would, though conceit was imputed to her, doubtless have been surprised to know that talk may be still, after more than half a century, made about her—the facts have in themselves quite sufficient colour, and the fact in particular of her having achieved, so unaided and so ungraced, a sharp identity. This identity was that of the talker, the moral *improvisatrice*, or at least had been in her Boston days, when, young herself, she had been as a sparkling fountain to other thirsty young. In the Rome of many waters there were doubtless fountains that quenched, collectively, any individual gush; so that it would have been, naturally, for her plentiful life, her active courage and company, that the little set of friends with whom we are

concerned valued her. She had bitten deeply into Rome, or, rather, *been*, like so many others, by the wolf of the Capitol, incurably bitten; she met the whole case with New England arts that show even yet, at our distance, as honest and touching; there might be ways for her of being vivid that were not as the ways of Boston. Otherwise what she would mainly prompt us to interest in might be precisely the beautiful moral complexion of the little circle of her interlocutors. That is ever half the interest of any celebrated thing—taking Margaret's mind for celebrated: the story it has to tell us of those for whom it flourished and whose measure and reflection it necessarily more or less gives. Let us hasten to add, without too many words, that Mme. Ossoli's circle represented, after all, a small stage, and that there were those on its edges to whom she was not pleasing. This was the case with Lowell and, discoverably, with Hawthorne; the legend of whose having had her in his eye for the figure of Zenobia, while writing "The Blithedale Romance," surely never held water. She inspired Mrs Browning, on the other hand, with sympathy and admiration, and the latter, writing of her in 1852, after the so lamentable end of her return-voyage, with her husband and child, to America —the wreck of the vessel, the loss of father,

mother and small son in sight of shore—says that "her death shook me to the very roots of my heart. The comfort is," Mrs Browning then adds, "that she lost little in the world — the change could not be loss to her. She had suffered, and was likely to suffer still more." She had previously to this, in December 1849, spoken of her, in a letter to Miss Mitford, as having "taken us by surprise at Florence, retiring from the Roman world with a husband and child above a year old. Nobody had even suspected a word of this underplot, and her American friends stood in mute astonishment before this apparition of them here. The husband is a Roman marquis appearing amiable and gentlemanly, and having fought well, they say, at the siege, but with no pretension to cope with his wife on any ground appertaining to the intellect." The "underplot" was precisely another of the personal facts by which the lady could interest—the fact, that is, that her marriage should *be* an underplot, and that her husband, much *decaduto*, should make explanation difficult. These things, let alone the final catastrophe, in short, were not talk, but life, and life dealing with the somewhat angular Boston sibyl on its own free lines. All of which, the free lines overscoring the unlikely material, is doubtless partly why the Margaret-ghost, as

I have ventured to call it, still unmistakably walks the old passages.

But I have given perhaps undue extension to Mrs Story's brief entries; each of which remains, none the less, a touch for the conceived picture. They drive, our friends, out to the Fair at Grotta Ferrata, taking their dinner with them, and see—well, indubitably see a great deal that is to be seen no more. One desires to miss no moment of it. They pursue a particular view, but to get at it "were forced to pass through a house and go out upon a little terrace built over the walls of the town." We warrant indeed they were, and we pass through the house with them and also go out on the terrace, lingering even longer than they, thinking of many things, having to make an effort, positively, to come back again and overtake them on another occasion; the day—namely, March 26th—when, at the Baths of Caracalla, they "passed one of the happiest, balmiest, serenest afternoons that ever came to man even under an Italian sky." After dining at the Unione, the day following, they go to the Metastasio and see (they honestly lack for nothing) Molière's "Tartuffe." They seem to dine most nights at the Unione; so that where, which, in the name of forsaken beliefs and impossible loyalties, *was* the Unione,

at which we never can dine? April 7th is, as a day, "glorious," and they drive out, early, to the Fountain of Egeria. "Spent the day in and about the Sacred Grove"—and they make no more of it, for the irritated ache in us, than that. *Such* a spending of days!—all the more that, before it ends, there is more Piazza Madama, there are more Roman scarfs, during the dramatic purchase of which I press them close, treading upon the ladies' heels, crowding with them into the low-browed old-time shop. The next day, the 8th, is Easter Sunday, with but a first allusion to the political regimen, which did not affect, after all, either the charm of the Fountain of Egeria or the treasures of Piazza Madama. Our friends have seen the Easter ceremonies at St Peter's the other time, the previous year, "when the Pope was here"—Pio Nono, penitent Liberal, being still at Gaeta—and care little to see them again with a republican sauce. The great Ristori is, on the other hand, by this time restored to them, and they applaud her first appearance, for the season, in Rome. The play, by Scribe, was "harrowing, but not good": in respect to which, mystified once more by the odd description, we yield again to sympathetic curiosity; most of Scribe's plays having, precisely, *been* "good" in the good old

sense—too good, in fact, in that beatific sense, to harrow. However, we should ourselves doubtless, all the same, and with Ristori to help, have been duly dealt with. They do at last enter St Peter's, in spite of the Republic, but on their own terms. "Went up into the ball on top of the dome and there sat and heard the wind roar." Story, in a vivid letter, as we shall see, makes ingeniously much of this. April 21st, Mrs Story notes, is, with the firing of cannon and the ringing of bells, "the anniversary of the natal day of Rome"; which is pleasantly puzzling (though all in the key of the confused booming and parading, the sunny flag-flapping and balcony speech-making, that attends short spring-time revolutions), inasmuch as the proclamation of the Republic, which is what is suggested, dated but from February 8th previous.

They go, at all events, to see the troops reviewed by General Avezzana in Piazza San Pietro, and are afterwards, interestedly enough, in the church. "Blind boy brought up to kiss St Peter's toe; his heavenly expression went to my heart—an expression I shall never forget and that I would often recall." They lunch in the "queer old *trattoria* at Monte Mario"—which is again a pang; there having been no queer old *trattoria* there, that I remember, in *our* time,

though doubtless there is a queer enough new one now. On April 25th Margaret came in to tell them "that all Rome was in a state of excitement, the news that the French had landed at Civita Vecchia having been received. We went with her to Piazza del Popolo to hear the addresses made to the people, and there we met, standing on a bench, the Princess Belgiojoso." But it all winds up again, for the evening, with Ristori in another play by Scribe. On the 29th, however, the plot once more thickens, and they go to watch the barricade-making at Porta San Giovanni, where they "vote the workmen too lazy to live." But this is doubtless all the better for Story, who, studious of movement and attitude, sits and sketches the scene from a pile of timber "destined to be used in the defence." They find, going home, great agitation in the streets; they see the Lombard reinforcements enter—Milan having had, before this, its own short, smothered outbreak—and they walk about the city to look at the various barricades. The approach of the French, to reinstate the Pope, becomes a reality; on the 30th General Oudinot and his army were hourly expected.

"All the streets have been deserted, and as we walked this morning through the Babuino we

were forcibly struck by the pause and hush of everything, the lull of the city as before the storm presently to fall upon it. It was as if the hour had come, and one could only pray for safe deliverance. We met on our way the terrified H., who urged us to remove to Casa Dies, whither he proposed to summon all Americans and place them under protection of our flag. While we were walking home we heard the first cannon and went quickly to move the children to Casa Dies, whence we have been seeing the whole battle. All day long the great interest and excitement continue. The house was filled with Americans, and as Frank Heath's rooms, which we had taken possession of, commanded the finest view, they all flocked thither. Margaret Fuller, who had been at the hospital, came to tell us about the wounded, of whom there were already seventy. At five o'clock, as the firing seemed to have abated, we went to the Pincio, whence we could see that the French had moved their position and, having been repulsed at Porta Cavallaggieri, were now before the Vatican gardens. The streets were kept lighted all night and all things prepared for a night attack. Rumours of all sorts were flying about and many persons greatly alarmed. We remained at Casa Dies, as our own house was cut off from the rest

of the city by a barricade which would be disagreeable in case of an attack. We kept looking at the watch-fires of the enemy as they blazed in the distance, and we got little sleep."

And Mrs Story's notes go on. On May 1st "the French have retreated; saw through the glass a slight skirmish, but it was so distant we couldn't make it out. Rumour that the Neapolitans are at Albano or Velletri. A glorious day indeed. Margaret came in as we were at breakfast. All is so unsettled about us that we can do nothing but talk and speculate, wish good to the Romans and ill to the French. Frank Heath went to the Hospital with Margaret and returned so full of interest and sympathy that he at once set on foot a subscription." On May 2nd, "as we had determined to take rooms permanently in Casa Dies, we packed up all our goods in our old quarters and made good our retreat. We went with Margaret to the Pellegrini Hospital and gave our money, some 225 dollars, to Princess Belgiojoso. Then we went to Spillman's to get ice for the Princess, and while there saw the burning of a cardinal's carriage, the blaze quite lighting up the front of the Propaganda." On the following day, the mother notes, their first little boy, whom they

were to lose early and inconsolably, was two years old. They go to the Vatican gardens "to see Ossoli," engaged there in the defence; and they "walked along the wall and saw the posts of the Guard who had fought so well, and the ground held by the French. As we looked from the wall this the third day after the battle we saw the monks under the black flag looking for the unburied dead who had fallen in the ditches or among the hedges. The French had retreated without an effort to bury their dead, and in one instance a living wounded man was found on this third day with the bodies of two dead soldiers lying across him." The entry is mutilated; she goes on, "Let no one say that the Romans did not"—but it breaks off; it is evidently some good word for the dear old Romans. On the 4th, however: "A continued suspension of all sorts of business. The Neapolitans, *si dice*, are still at Albano, and Garibaldi has gone to meet them"—the Neapolitans being the troops despatched by King Bomba to the aid of the French, and whose virtue, for this particular purpose, was subsequently to be questioned. Our friends settle definitely at Casa Dies, Margaret joining them, and they dine together—that is with Frank Heath and her; "dinner sent in from a *cucina*. Pleasant days

and evenings; the weather cloudless; our balcony, which overlooks the city, a rich source of interest." Margaret's personal situation, it comes to us, must have been more or less of the same; as I may mention that on the occasion, just recorded, of their going to see the martial Ossoli in the gardens of the Vatican, we have it that a relative, who was with them and who appears to have been either too much or too little informed, took the odd line of not giving the lady in question "a chance to say anything of a private nature" to the gallant volunteer. The sense of things of a private nature was unmistakably in the air.

However, these are swallowed up in things of a public when, on May 5th, Story goes to see Mazzini, who gives an order for a guard in their house in case of trouble. Thus they seem, gathered together, to wait; and it is always interesting to learn how besieged persons do wait. "Salad-making and conversation" is one of their resources, and, on their adjourning to the apartments of a friend in the same caravansary, "some very bad music." One likes every little fact of these abnormal hours, every characteristic detail. "We need not even take a walk, for the gardens of the Quirinal stretch out before us, and the footing in the streets

is most unpleasant, as they have all been strewn with gravel, so that the cavalry may not slip." On the 7th there is "moonlight, which we spent on our balcony, talking, dreaming, listening to the distant city sounds." On the 10th comes news of the defeat of the Neapolitans by Garibaldi. "This infused new courage and zeal into the minds of the Romans. *Generale* beaten in the streets, as the French were said to be coming on." They walked that afternoon, in spite of this alarm, on the Pincian and turn "heart-sick" from the sight of the destruction of numbers of the fine trees in Villa Borghese, hewn down, for the construction of defences, to their stumps. They go on the morrow to St Peter's, "just after sunset, as a sombre shade," Mrs Story mentions, "was settling in its aisles and hiding all its ornaments, so that the great lines of its architecture were all we felt and saw. Never had I seen it so impressively, wonderfully beautiful. We were there quite by ourselves, and wandered silently about, subdued by the presence of some deep spiritual influence. But at length we were called from our reveries by the custode, who invited us to leave before the church was closed for the night. *Then* I bade it a final farewell. I felt this to be my last visit, at least for many years.

And although I did again go, it was not in the spirit, for then I heard a chant and saw some mummery or other which could not move my soul. This was the hour of my parting from that which, next to the deep heart of nature as seen in sacred spots, has had power to move me." They are on the eve of departure, and they begin to circulate again, see Modena once more as a Louis XI. Italianised from Casimir Delavigne, just as Casimir's figure had been Gallicised from Walter Scott's. They walk afresh on the Pincian and see the French encamped near Monte Mario. Then, on the 19th, they effect an oddly timed sortie, driving to Tivoli through Porta San Giovanni, and with Avezzana's pass carrying them "through the guards and over the flower-covered dewy Campagna." They have chosen the occasion but for an excursion and are in Rome again on the 21st. "Ossoli came in the evening, one of the last sad days in Rome." They get off on the 24th, sleeping that night at Civita Castellana. "Passed by the French camp at the foot of Monte Mario, and under our white flag had no trouble." They take their way past Narni, Terni, Spoleto, Foligno, where the hotels are filled with officers; and through Perugia, where they lodge "in an old palace,

the remains of splendour still lingering about it," and sleep "in a state bed under a canopy of crimson damask." On May 30th at Incisa, while they were breakfasting, "we were called to the window to see the Austrian troops pass on their way to Perugia. A whole battalion, whose stony, solid aspect quite made us tremble for the fate of poor Rome."

At Florence, on the 31st, they "found Austrian officers at the gates, whom we at once recognised as such by their be-braided coats. . . . Florence seemed less agreeable than when we left it even, for the streets were filled with Austrian troops and officers. The poor extinct *guardia civica* was hiding its diminished head, and of all the noise and bustle we had heard during the winter, the talk of heroic resistance, fighting to the death, 'viva la Repubblica,' nothing remained, scarcely the memory of it. The heat was overpowering and Doney's and ices our only resource." They see a review of the Austrian troops in the Cascine by Radetzky. They bear hard upon Florence—"in all our last summer's experience of the heat at Sorrento we had nothing like this. In the winter we froze here, in the summer we bake." Things had gone ill with the Florentine Liberals, and they find them rather abject. The Grand Duke had been invited to depart, and had de-

parted, and then had been invited to return, and had returned, or was just about to, the Austrian ascendancy, with plenty of bayonets, having prevailed. The bayonets embraced the occasion of the procession of Corpus Domini to show "the trembling Florentines their superior drill. . . . Florence appears to us now so fallen and abject in her cringing submission to them that we can feel no interest in her, and long to breathe a freer air. Looking back at Rome we can't but make the comparison unfavourable to Florentine valour—and tell them of it too." After which pardonably Parthian shot Mrs Story's animated diary records their departure, by the middle of June, for Bologna and their subsequent stop at Modena, where the picture of Rogers's Ginevra, ostensibly to be seen, sadly fades away from them under the affirmation of the *valet-de-place* that it is "the fiction of a poet." By Piacenza and Lodi they reach Milan, where I pause with them to avail myself of the fact that Story, meanwhile, during their Roman days, had been memorising not less sharply, as well as more copiously, than his wife. Do we not already find in these unstudied images of the siege and of the road, terrorised by foreign troops, something of the poetry of

> "Old forgotten far-off things,
> And battles long ago"?

This chronicler, at all events, desiring to miss no impression, since, evidently, to a sharpened appetite for figures and scenes, there was matter for impression—this chronicler trudges by the old travelling-carriage as it climbs the Umbrian hills, hangs about the inn doors, with the ear-ringed *vetturino*, at Narni and Spoleto, at Incisa and Perugia, and wouldn't, frankly, for such sense as we may get from it to-day, have had a single Austrian officer absent or heard a scabbard the less trail along a stone-paved passage. I even retrace our steps, without scruple, to pick up any loose flower of this blood-spattered Roman spring that may be to our purpose.

Story had begun to journalise from the moment of their return to Rome, and is full of ideas and emotions about everything, of happy æsthetic response and expression. "I could not help thinking as we passed the Tiber" —at the end of March—"how like it was to the Italian character; turbulent without depth, violent and turbid in its current, full of whirl-pools, narrow, overflowing constantly its banks, subject to great rises and great depressions, and having at bottom unknown riches and precious things concealed by its violence and muddiness." He was to probe much further, before he had done with it, this particular

mystery, and, though not perhaps the most patient of explorers, in any direction — rather the most alert and confident—to learn as much as he desired, before he had done, about the Italian character. "In the evening I heard some truly noble music at Charles Perkins's; the grand septuor by Beethoven, which is enough to move the heart of a rock, so deep and exquisite and yearning. And a very beautiful trio by Hummel, solid and various and noble. To recline on a sofa and look at the frescoes by which I was surrounded, and, with a cigar breathing about its aromatic smoke, to listen to the divine outpourings of the grandest music, is a paradise of sensuous and spiritual delight." An entry which has none the less sweetness for us from its playing its faint lantern (as of candlelight very especially, this time, in old saloons) over one of the most appealing of our ghosts. A master of all the amenities, an accomplished student of Italian art, the author of the "Tuscan Sculptors," which was to be long the prime authority on its subject, Charles Perkins lives for us again both in such echoes as these—echoes of hospitalities to which other associated figures, those of his friendly house, gave character and colour — and in the unforgotten harshness of premature and accidental

death. "The news arrives to-day," Story immediately goes on (April 1st), "of Charles Albert's utter defeat at Novara, with the flight, on the first fire, of 1500 Lombards and the loss of everything. These are terrible news. The Piedmontese fought well, it is said, but it is loudly asserted that Carlo Alberto never meant to conquer and that the battle was a sham to excuse his future action. He has abdicated in favour of his eldest son, Vittorio Emanuele, who is in treaty with Radetzky. . . . What a people! Never is a battle without a *tradimento*. Yet it is said that the King exposed himself in action, and his son also, who was wounded." But I cite without interruption, for the charm of their freshness of impression, a full series of these memoranda, beginning (for the sense of what the subject has always endlessly to give) with a vision of the interior of St Peter's at close of day.

. . . "What a sweet open air breathes through it, like a smile upon the face, like morning sunlight! How free and noble and simple and pure swell up its arches and dome, so ornamented, yet as if no ornament were there! So chaste and subduing are its grand circular effects of architecture that, as a strongly pronounced tonic

dominates every [illegible] of the chord and every variety of note, they compel all incrustation and ornament to simplicity. So always the church has the effect of music, of unity interpenetrating and harmonising variety. The great keynote of the dome rules the whole fabric and is echoed in its circular arches and down its many aisles. I listened to the single soprano voice which chaunted mournfully and in minor modulations, with every pathetic tone, the lamentations of Jeremiah—floating out like a glass thread in the great interior and dying and rising in mournful strains. After this was over and the candles were extinguished came the Miserere, in solemn and wailing counterpoint, with passages of earnest imploring that sounded through the chapel, while the single candle burned in the dimness for the singers, like a hope in adversity, and the gathering shadows nestled into the dome and confused the upper outlines.

"*April 5th.* — At the Villa Albani, from its beautiful portico, where sit so many antique statues, I looked out at the view of the Campagna and the Alban hill on one side and the Volscian mountains in the far distance. In front were the gardens of the Villa, set squarely out and surrounded with box, with tubs of oranges and tall vases of cactus and aloes, and with a

fountain playing in the middle. This, with the wall surmounted by two sleeping lions and with here and there an ornamented ball, formed the foreground, while just behind, on the left, were two beautiful clumps of cypresses standing dark and solemn, one at a little distance from the other, shaking their tall green plumes in the air against the pure blue sky. Near by, was an arch with a statue on a pedestal in its centre and a fountain gushing out below.

"*April 8th, Easter Sunday.*—In the evening came the illumination of St Peter's, of which the Republic assumed the direction in the absence of the church dignitaries. At 8 we were on the piazza, where were great crowds gathered. Over the church and the colonnade hung only a few lights. Suddenly a rocket whizzed up from the centre of the piazza, and instantaneously blazed out a deep crimson flame all along the great arms of the colonnade, flaming against every pillar and flushing over the whole façade of the church, climbing the cupola and leaning upon the cross. The columns stood like pillars of crimson fire and the intervals were filled with light like that which gathers round the dying sun as it sinks after a burning day. So the pillars round the cupola seemed to waver in their splendour and to open into intense chambers of

gorgeous flame. The cross at top was like a series of immense jewels about to melt. The whole outer façade blushed and glowed with the same intensity of colour, reflecting back the splendour of the colonnade; and in all the inner hollows of the arches was a pale green light, exquisite and delicate as the inside of the mother-of-pearl shell, but intense as molten metal, which set off the crimson of the outer front. The circular cupola also flashed forth alternate rings of crimson and green, like crowns and circlets of the most wondrous jewels. It was as if the whole was bound about with molten ruby and ultramarine. Over the faces of the crowd was the same light, and as this wondrous enchantment grew into existence a thrill went over the whole assembly; they shouted till the sky answered. Pale, serious and distant looked the calm stars, and the great dark obelisk stood up in the centre of the piazza like the finger of fate and seemed to say, 'Shine while you may, you thing of a few years; but I, who have seen centuries and centuries pass, shall stand when you are nothing.' After about a quarter of an hour the great bell sounded slowly and the second illumination began. The fires began to whirl round and circle up and hurry about over the façade and cupola and colonnade, and before

the bell sounded twelve the whole architecture was written against the sky in lines of light—a pure architectural outline in dotted fire, all the solid material gone and only the ideal frame remaining. The whole structure seemed to waver as the myriad flames fluttered in the wind. Sometimes it looked like an immense hive covered with an immense swarm of fiery bees that fluttered around it, sometimes like a splendidly jewelled crown.

"*April* 9*th.*—Worked at the figure of the girl writing on sand and began in earnest with it; had a sitting of two hours from Vincenza. She is not as fine as last year; I find all her proportions heavy and short. Her waist and her legs are ruined. So it is with these Roman girls; there is but a short moment when they serve—as they top girlhood and bloom. For a year then they are fine in parts—just full enough; but a couple of years fattens and spoils their forms, and they sink altogether. Generally below the bosom they are good for nothing; good only in bosom, neck, head and arms.

"*April* 11*th.*—Went up into the cupola of St Peter's and there had a magnificent view of the brick-world of Rome below, and of the Campagna and mountains and sea beyond; saw how we are planted in the midst of the great Cam-

pagna sea, which stretched round on all sides its level plain; saw also beneath us the complicated buildings of the Vatican and its truly Italian gardens, its long shady walks cut through hedges, its playing fountains, its Belvedere court, where once tournaments were held. We ascended into the ball, a large copper ball in which some 8 or 10 persons can sit and which is cut through by several longitudinal slits. Here the effect of the high wind which roared throughout and whistled through the crevices was wonderful. It seemed as if we were whirling off into space in some strange engine that laboured and panted as it cleared the blue air. Now the wind sang through it like the faint tones of an Æolian lyre, sweet as the rustling leaves of forests or the sound of brooks; now it stormed like a tempest and resounded hollow and terrible as in the incantation in 'Der Freischütz.' Now it went like thousands of looms in a tremendous factory, whirring and whizzing, and now swarmed and shrieked like wailing demons. Holding on to the great iron bars, we felt as if we were loose in the air, on some mad career, in the great planet-world of the dance that speeds on in space, with all the earth far below like a speck. Never were there more delicate, tender tones of love than sighed and moaned in our brazen air-

ship. . . . Tremendous waterfalls we seemed to pass by, and sounding caves; we heard the tempest, in the open, beating the back of the huge swell and shrieking amid the shrouds and cordage of foundering vessels; we heard the groan of mighty forests, the breaking up of the polar ice, the swoop of the avalanche into the vale, the roar of immense furnaces. The gale played on our ball as on a lyre.

"*April 25th.*—To-day comes news that the French have landed 1500 men at Civita Vecchia, and the city is in great agitation. No one knows what are their intentions, but everything is feared among the Romans, who are as easily scared as a flock of sheep. An *affiche* proclaiming that *La Repubblica è in Pericolo* was on every wall this morning, calling the people to meet in Piazza del Popolo at 11. . . . Sterbini arose in a carriage and said that the *generosissimi Romani* must be quiet, that the French had been deceived into a supposition that there was anarchy here, and that when they learned the fact they would embrace the Romans as brothers. I met the Princess Belgiojoso, grown much older and negligently dressed. We walked along together up beyond the Pantheon, and I then left her. She was very cordial and agreeable, and pressed me to come and see her. In the evening

we heard Ristori in the part of a simple country girl. She performed it admirably.

"*April 27th.*— . . . To Porta Cavalleggieri and Porta Angelica to see the barricades, or rather earth-mounds, ramparts, stockades, which the Romans are building in the event of the French. They had been working at these some thirty hours, and in some places had done three feet. Bunker Hill ramparts were thicker. Here nothing is right earnest. The labourers were leaning picturesquely on their spades, doing nothing, and everything was going on as leisurely as if the enemy were in France instead of at a few hours' march of the city. I understand from Vincenzo Bassanelli that the Guardia are nearly unanimous in desiring the return of the Pope and the abolition of the Triumvirate and Republic, and that they will not fight. . . .

"*April 28th.* — Went early with Margaret Fuller to Piazza Santa Apostoli to see the Guardia Civica meet and be harangued. Sterbini asked them if at the cost of their blood they were ready to defend the city; to which they screamed 'Si!' and held up their hats on their bayonets, making the piazza ring with huzzas. But the enthusiasm did not seem of the right stuff—it was rather a *festa* demonstration.

"*April 29th.* — Barricades are erecting and

the people preparing as for defence; scores of labourers and *contadini* standing round and sometimes pitching a shovelful of gravel into a wheelbarrow, but taking about three days to do what an hour did at Berlin. The drum is sounding constantly in the streets, and soldiers are parading and patrolling. This morning we saw the Lombard legion of refugees march in at Porta San Giovanni.

"*April 30th.*—Expectation of the hourly approach of the French. All the streets deserted, gloomy and morose, as before some terrible thunderstorm. The women were all fled to the houses, save here and there one whom curiosity had led out. The shops all shut, with here and there a door half open and revealing the form of a soldier peering out. At the barracks the people were busily working, and all things taking a serious turn. As we returned at about one o'clock we heard the pealing cannon and knew that the battle had begun. We then went to the top of Casa Dies and from the balcony could see the smoke of the cannon and musketry quiver and roll out, and hear the boom and rattle of their reports come travelling slowly after. At almost five we learned that the French had been repulsed at Porta Pancrazia and Porta Cavalleggieri, and shortly afterwards that they

had attacked the walls by the Vatican, and been also repulsed there. . . . Margaret F., who has been at the Ospedale dei Pellegrini, reports there 70 wounded, some very severely, all suffering terribly and groaning with the burning pain of the bullet. This is the shocking reverse of the picture of glory; these are the bloody ends of the threads that work up the tapestry of honour and war. One cannot, however, but be excited and interested in a struggle like this—to repel the most unjustifiable invasion and aggression. But a short year ago France struggled through a bloody revolution for free principles and government, and won republican institutions at the cost of immense blood and money and a shattered political system. And now almost its first political act is the invasion of the only republic in Europe, contrary to its own constitution and to all international laws and rights.

"*May* 1*st*.—The French have retreated, and though we have been spying from the windows nothing can be seen. The Romans are all elated and surprised even at themselves. . . . The report is that a large force of Neapolitans is marching on Rome and is now at Velletri or Albano. This seems most unfortunate, but there is such a deadly hatred between the

Romans and Neapolitans, since the return of the troops of the latter from Lombardy, that there is no doubt they will be successfully resisted. Our *donna*, hearing that the French had retreated, threw up her hands as in gratitude; but, on learning that the Neapolitans were coming on to attack Rome, said artlessly, with a disdainful sneer, 'That is nothing—we can beat them. Son' *anche* pauorosi'—afraid, that is, as well as the Romans!

"*May 2nd.*— . . . We went to carry our money to the Princess Belgiojoso, directress of all the hospitals, whom we found sitting surrounded with men and women, giving her various orders with calmness and clearness and showing the greatest practicality and good sense in all her arrangements. She has laid down strict rules and reduced the establishment to order and discipline; for three days and two nights she has been without sleep and still is strong. Then we went to Spillman's to get her an ice-cream to cool her parched throat, and while we were there came screaming and hooting a crowd which dragged along two cardinals' carriages magnificently painted and gilt. These with pickaxes and clubs they broke entirely to pieces and set fire to, crying out, 'This is the blood of the poor!'—'E il sangue dei poveri!' Going

along, we met Garibaldi's party, which had met a French detachment and taken 30 prisoners. Returning to the hospital we carried our ice to the Princess, and she partook of it, giving part to her little child, into whose stifling room I went to give it to her. Then we went over the wards—but how horrible is this reverse side of war! . . . I wish Pio Nono could have been there to see the result of his irresolution and vacillation, or rather of his weak and cruel inconsistency. Here is a man who refused to aid by his word a war for the liberty of Italy, and to free his country from oppression, because of the blood by which it must be purchased, and who less than a year after invokes foreign intervention and sheds, indirectly, the blood of his people to regain his temporal power and reinstate tyranny.

"*May 3rd.*—At the Vatican gardens, where we went to see Ossoli and saw the whole plan of the battle, the men talked with great spirit, told me all the particulars and said the Romans were a little timid at first, but grew hotter and fiercer as the battle continued, and at last were full of courage and confidence, even to heroism.

"*May 5th.*— . . . Called on Mazzini the Triumvir, whom I found haggard and worn in appearance, with rather an agreeable face, dim

black eyes, full forehead, straight black hair and grizzled beard. He speaks English and wished that America could give the Republic its sympathy and adhesion. His practicality, I cannot but think, has been veneered over his mind by his English life. Essentially, like almost all Italians, he is visionary. But he sees and understands the virtue of simple direct action. There was a little the affectation of a busy man with him, and he was of course oppressed with labour and distracted by details. But he had an air beyond this.

"*May 6th.* — Went in the evening to the Trinita dei Pellegrini to carry the American subscription for the wounded in the late battle. Everything was in complete order, clean floors and beds, good ventilation, attendants gentle and without confusion. These the hospital owes to the Princess, who has a genius for ordering and systematising. She said that nothing was more pleasant to her than to attend to the sick—it was indeed a sort of passion, for she added that in the sick-room one is *sure* of doing good. All efforts of charity in other directions may fail of their end—money given may be squandered or do injury; but the relief of physical pain is a thing definite and certain.

"*May 7th.* — . . . At the gate of Villa

Ludovisi we obtained entrance, but scarcely had we advanced far when a self-sufficient and extremely impertinent person, who represented himself as the Principe, met us and told us the place was not public. Nothing more vulgar than his manner could well be imagined, and I cannot imagine him, from his behaviour, to have been Prince Piombino. He rather resembled an ignoramus grown suddenly rich and immensely elated by the fact. All the evening we leaned on the balcony and looked over the city bathed in moonlight—sleeping in a pale shroud of faint mist. Far away, like a dream, dim and delicate, stood St Peter's against the thickened horizon; near by the Quirinal tower lifted its silhouette square against the sky; the obelisk before the Trinita dei Monti held up its dark needle at the end of the Gregoriana, and a thousand domes and towers and arched loggias rose, all around, from the roofs. Every now and then came by a band of Romans singing, or we heard the measured tramp of the patrol, or the laughing voices of girls talking below. Afar, from the Palace of the Cæsars or the Coliseum, an owl kept hooting.

"*May 8th.*—I was successful in finding my old *tornatore*, Malpieri, for whom I have now waited more than a week. I found him in bed, in a

room without windows and containing three beds —hot, close, stifled enough, with his head bandaged and in a fever. To my surprise, however, he offered to come to-morrow and cast my figure for me. Glad enough was I to find him, for the figure has now been finished more than a week, cracking and shrinking.

"*May* 13*th*.—Went to hear Modena in 'Louis XI.'—every movement studied to the life and with all the freedom of nature. The decaying powers of an old selfish wretch, hanging with despairing hope and convulsive energy over the bleak precipice of death and losing his grasp on life every moment—all this was terribly true. A great piece of acting, as great as any I ever saw, if not the greatest.

"*May* 19*th*.—This morning early set off for Tivoli, having yesterday evening procured a pass from General Avezzana to go out by Porta S. Giovanni. Outside we found the vineyard walls all battered down to prevent the enemy from taking shelter behind them, and the road was therefore filled with rubbish. Soon we passed this, and were out on the clear Campagna, which was beautiful, rejoicing in light and carpeted with the wildest profusion of flowers. Myriads of scarlet poppies slept in the sunshine, lifting

their tall nodding heads among luxuriant weeds and grass. There were companies of bristling thistles, with their balls of purple blossom, and blue strips of meadow crowded with star of Bethlehem and purple troops of various flowers of which I know not the name. And wild roses hanging out their sprays like floating wreaths, and spears of bearded barley, and richest growths of all sorts of large-leaved weeds. Overhead, fluttering along in the clear blue, trilled the sky-larks, making the air liquid with their songs and rising as they poured forth their soul to the morning. Sometimes the fields looked positively painted, for the flowers were not only dotted here and there and everywhere, but were sometimes so clotted and heaped together that they seemed like sweeps of colour — blue, purple, yellow, bright scarlet, pale rose — from a full brush, across the sward. The dews were on the grass and covered this wild greenery, all the blossoming and flowering, with diamonds. At 11 we arrived at the Villa, having been but some three hours in covering the distance which occupied Hadrian and his luxurious retinue two or three days. We passed a picturesque Ponte di Lucano, which Poussin painted, with its stream flowing through light willows and the old circular tomb of Plautius Lucanus, battlemented in the

middle ages, watching over it, and behind saw the dark cypresses and broad-spreading pines grouped together."

We feel it a pity, may we not freely confess? in respect to the foregoing, that we have so scant a title to recruit for our faded company one of the figures intrinsically the most interesting and most marked we are likely to meet. It would unquestionably have taken, on the part of our friends, but a slightly less limited acquaintance with the Princess Belgiojoso to have made me not hesitate to seek for our pages the benefit of her remarkable presence. Her striking, strange name (which, in connection with her title, seemed, always, of old, to scintillate, exotically, orientally, for eye and ear) was in the air, when we were young, very much as that of Garibaldi was to be a little later, and with the note of the *grande dame* added, for mystification, to that of the belligerent. The history of this extraordinary woman and of her revolutionary career has lately been written, in detail and with much vivacity, by an Italian investigator,[1] whose portrait of his heroine, vivid, elaborate and placing in a strong light her many gifts, leaves us in depths of doubt —which are yet also not without their interest—

[1] La Principessa Belgiojoso. Raffaello Barbiera. Milano, 1902.

as to the relation, in her character, of the element of sincerity and the element that we have learned, since her day, from expert neighbours, to call by the useful name of *cabotinage*. A Lombard of old race, a Trivulzio and essentially a great lady, an ardent worker for the liberation of her country, was she not, to a tune full of renewals of suggestion, at once a sincere, a passionate crusader and a "bounder," as we elegantly say, of the real bounding temperament? Nothing is more curious, as we read her story, than the apparent mixture in her of the love of the thing in itself and the love of all the attitudes and aspects, the eccentricities and superfluities of the thing; a mixture which, however, after all, may represent little more than the fact that she was romantic, so to speak, in spite of herself, that the romantic appearance at least, in a life of eminent exile, of conspiracy, of all sorts of adventurous fellowship, was forced upon her by the general connection. The incoherent facts of her origin and person, moreover, greatly added to it; the strange, pale, penetrating beauty, without bloom, health, substance, that was yet the mask of an astounding masculine energy; the "social position" so oddly allied with her perpetual immersion in printer's ink, with the perpetual founding, conducting, supporting, replenishing,

from her own inspiration, of French and Italian propagandist newspapers. Not the least interest she would probably present to a near view would be by freshly reminding us that the great political or social agitator is most often a bird of curious plumage, *all* of whose feathers, even the queerest, play their part in his flight. We must take him, in either sex, as the wild wood produces him; he is not to be plucked as for preparation for the table. The Princess Belgiojoso, in any case, welcomed and valued, among the wounded of the siege, the offered aid of Mme. Ossoli, to whom the biographer just mentioned—quoting also, in memory of the hospital-service during these difficult days, from Story's "Roba di Roma"—devotes an eloquent commemoration. "Gloria a lei, vera amica d'Italia nostra! Gloria, o fortissima!"

## IV.

### VENICE AND BERLIN.

STORY, at Florence, at the end of May, notes the town as "full of Austrians; the officers, in their white coats, faced with purple, in every café and jingling everywhere through the streets."

"To-day (June 1st) we went to the Cascine to see them reviewed, and I feared for our poor Romans when I saw how they marched and heard the thunder of their guns. We met a crowd of people who, although this was a review of enemies, were ready to make it a *festa*. Their taste of republicanism under Guerrazzi's infamous administration was indeed sufficient to disgust them, but how they can tolerate the Austrians here, how they, or any one, could have cheered them on their entrance to the city, passes my comprehension. Upon so fitful and fickle a people what hold is there? I hear

them now justify the entrance of the Austrians by saying that Tuscany is a fief of Austria, and congratulate themselves that now they can sleep peacefully in their beds. Meantime the Guardia Civica is abolished and all are forced to surrender their arms under penalty of being shot, as several have been in Leghorn.

"*June 5th.*—At the convent of San Marco the corridors and cloisters turned into barracks by the Austrians and bestrewn with the straw of their beds and litters, while they, coarse, dirty, rank-smelling, lay sprawled around half-dressed, some of them asleep, some squabbling and shouting over their food, some polishing up their arms, some mending their clothes and shoes. Beato Angelico was in strange company, and the fragrance of his suavity much at odds with the odour of their perspiration. A dirty monk, strong as a bed of garlic, guided me round! . . . I stood in the cloisters filled with soldiers and remembered that through this courtyard the noble and unsparing Savonarola was dragged by a brutal mob on Palm Sunday just 3½ centuries ago, to be racked, tortured and then burned. How much progress since then has been made? Should in this convent a monk preach against the abuses of the government and in favour of liberty as Savonarola against the

vices of the Church and in favour of liberty and reform, would he suffer a much different fate? Not the stake, but the prison, exile or the musket-ball, would be his fate.

"*June 7th.*—Corpus Domini, and all the streets between the Palazzo Vecchio and S. Maria Novella, as well as a lofty staging all across the Piazza, were covered by a canvas awning at the height of the third storey of the houses—under all of which the procession passed. The covered way, on either side, was lined by soldiers, Austrians on one side, Italians the other, and military bands playing all the while the procession moved. First came the *compagnie* of the churches, clothed in white with dark overshirts and with cowls on their heads, bearing church banners; then different orders of monks and priests, with torches, and croaking out chaunts which sounded, in the intervals of music, like the chattering of frogs; then the nobles, richly dressed, with crimson capes, and finally, under a canopy, the Host carried along. After this came the soldiery, all kneeling as the Host passed into the church. The order afterwards was given for the troops to fire, and the Piazza rang with the report of a thousand muskets. This was repeated three times, and then the procession reappeared, the Host was turned

round to all the audience, and it passed away followed by the soldiery and the crowd as before."

They have had, on June 8th, "these last two days, the most melancholy news of the battle between the Romans and the French." He relates the temporary repulse of the latter, of Oudinot by Garibaldi, and other matters, but also the imminence of a fresh and a greater attack. "What will be the end? Fatal, I fear, for Rome. Yet how bravely and resolutely she has acted; how glorious her position compared with that of the French!" Fortunately, even in those days, in Italy, one could lose one's self in other questions. "How magnificent, at the Pitti, are Titian's portraits! That of the unknown who looks straight forward with grey eyes that go through one—so calm and personal are they; so living and scrutinising that they would never let one feel alone in the room. And the fierce hard head of Aretino, full-bearded—what noble portraits all of them, how simple, strong, individual! And all that comes from Giorgione has such a charm; he had all that Titian lacked—soul. The Madonna della Seggiola I cannot think so superior; the composition is beautiful, and nothing could be more so than

the head of the Child, noble and prophetic; but the Madonna is insipid and seems to care for nothing but the spectator. The colour is much injured and the glazing much gone; so that the picture looks raw and faded despite the false glazing of the glass. Rubens' landscapes are as free as air. Still, there is no *love* in them." And then again, a day or two later, "Picture-hunting and buying all day long"—one of the penetrating notes of the good old time, even when, as apparently in this case, the golden quest (for the gold was far from *all* rubbed off, and Botticelli, practically undiscovered, wasted his sweetness) was on behalf of importunate friends. The note of the good old time is also, I cannot but think, in the circumstances attending, on the morrow, their departure from Florence.

"Passed Pratolino and in a couple of hours were among the Apennines. Stopped at Fonte Buono, a picturesque little town, where we took some wine. As the carriage jogged on I sat outside and dreamed, looking up and down the mountain while the shadows began to thicken in the valleys and the masses to grow confused. Now and then along the curving road we heard the jingling of mule-bells and passed groups of

*contadini;* and as we stopped at the post-station to change horses we heard the full-throated nightingales pouring out their honeyed wailing and striking their quick-throbbing notes. Overhead hung a deep blackish-grey cloud and beneath it a burnished strip of yellow sunlight; the lingering colour of the sunset still shone through the cleft of the mountain. Wild and desolate and strange the mountains closed us in, and I amused myself all the way with the thought of the chances there were for banditti. I remembered the story of the innkeeper at Covelaio (a village we expected to reach by midnight) who used to murder travellers at his house and burn up all vestiges of them and their equipages. It was the type, all round, of the scenes that 'savage Rosa drew.' I was also reminded of Poussin's grim solitudes."

They were presently to cross the Alps, but I cannot better help myself to delay leaving Italy with them than by quoting a letter written a few weeks before.

*W. W. Story to J. R. Lowell.*

"Rome, *March 21st*, 1849.

"My dear Jim,— . . . I see that in a moment I shall be telling you what Emelyn has

already: how, one night as I was going out of the theatre, a stout fair German with a moustache placed his hand on my shoulder, how this figure resolved itself into F. H., and how I caught him, brought him to No. 4272 Via della Scala, 2 piano, back-room, gave him a glass of wine and stared at him and talked to him until 2 o'clock in the morning. We had received your books that very day, and as soon as we had got over our surprise we took you into our company and laughed heartily over your jokes, true as good, and plunged into the deeper waters of your poems, feeling that we were all three together once again. 'The Biglow Papers' I used to read to convulsed audiences at our weekly 'at home' on Sunday evenings, giving them as well as I could the true Yankee note, and one evening I interpreted in the same tones one of them to the Brownings, who were quite as much amused and delighted as I. The 'Fable for Critics' is admirable and just what I think in almost all points. It is very witty and, as the English say, 'amazingly clever.' Once or twice you were biassed by friendships (how can one help being? it is so graceful an error) and once by prejudice; but you know this really as well as I. There is but one thing I regretted, and that was that you drove your arrow so sharply through Miranda.

The joke of 'Tiring-woman to the Muses' is too happy; but because fate has really been unkind to her, and because she depends on her pen for her bread-and-water (and that is nearly all she has to eat), and because she is her own worst enemy, and because through her disappointment and disease, which (things) embitter every one, she has struggled most stoutly and manfully, I could have wished you had let her pass scot-free. But you beat Butler at rhymes and everybody at puns. . . .

"F. H. is as charming as ever—as Hamlet-like in every respect; his mind the same, but enriched and developed and Germanised. How much I enjoy his society and friendship here you can easily imagine. It was a dream I never expected to be realised, to have him and Rome together, and now we are together every day, riding on the Campagna, visiting the ruins, seeing the Vatican by torchlight and the Coliseum by Bengal lights, and sitting up to two and three o'clock at night, talking over old days, philosophising, criticising.

"The Brownings and we became great friends in Florence, and of course we could not become friends without liking each other. He, Emelyn says, is like *you*—judge from this portrait? He is of my size, but slighter, with straight black

hair, small eyes, wide apart, which he twitches constantly together, a smooth face, a slightly aquiline nose, and manners nervous and rapid. He has a great vivacity, but not the least humour, some sarcasm, considerable critical faculty, and very great frankness and friendliness of manner and mind. Mrs Browning used to sit buried up in a large easy chair, listening and talking very quietly and pleasantly, with nothing of that peculiarity which one would expect from reading her poems. Her eyes are small, her mouth large, she wears a cap and long curls. Very unaffected and pleasant and simple-hearted is she, and Browning says 'her poems are the least good part of her.' . . . Once in a while *I* write verses, and I think I have written better here than ever before—which is not perhaps saying much. I have hundreds of statues in my head to make, but they are in the future tense.

"Powers I knew very well in Florence. He is a man of great mechanical talent and natural strength of perception, but with no poetry in his composition, and I think no creative power. . . . When I compare him to Page I feel his inferiority; and, after all, I have met very few, if any, persons who affect me so truly as men of genius as Page. Certainly there are very few *artists* like him."

If we talk of shades roused from their rest, this is perhaps the best occasion for saying that the interesting and ill-fated genius so appreciatively mentioned plays his part in such a company with really tragic plenitude, the work having been as interesting as the man and yet being by this time, as I have already hinted, almost as completely extinct. It adds to my own sense of William Page's having become, in this manner, fairly the ghost of a ghost that I can remember, from far-away New York years, the extreme actuality that, for impressed childish ears, he enjoyed in the talk of our elders, and how, during his period in Europe, at a date probably somewhat later than that of Story's allusion, he was felt, in the little American art-world, as a bright but absent and regretted light. The darkness that was altogether to supervene appears to have been the result of a technical theory, some fallacy as to pigments, some perversity as to bases, too fondly, too blindly entertained, and of which I am unable to give an account. In presence of such an accident we reflect, not without complacency for our own hour, that, had Page, as a young portraitist of genius, been a somewhat later fruit of time, he would have gone to school not in Rome, but in Paris, and so probably, under a finer discipline,

have been kept in the straight path. His fate represents, after all, clumsy *waste*, unlighted freedom of experiment possible only (for it comes back to that) in provincial conditions. And his idea of himself, all the while, was that he was at school to Titian. The young person of other years, in any case, may entertain the recollection of a portrait hanging, here and there, in New York and in Boston, which was even then as dim as it was distinguished, was even still as distinguished as it was dim. It is possibly the glamour of time and of association, but there seem to have been no other such portraits as those, things that gloomed out sadly, above Victorian sofas in incongruous "parlours," like consciously imprisoned spectres of strayed, of abused Italians. I am safe, at the worst, perhaps, to think of them so nobly, for the dungeon-darkness must surely, in most cases, quite have settled by this time. I may add that, as things of the deepening twilight, they associate themselves in memory with the rare relics of Washington Allston, another victim of blighting conditions, for whom Story's word, later on, utters itself in sympathy. The Allstons, in the old parlours too, and over the old pianos, seemed (though not portraits) somehow to express genius struggling with adversity, yet luckily less doomed

and originally less compromised by "style." The twilight is, however, over all, and an indiscreet lamp, held up, would perhaps betray me.

The letter I have just cited suggests to me that I cannot place better than here the nearest approach I find to an answer. It was not written, this supposititious answer, till six months later, but that is quite consistent, in friendly correspondence, with the nature of answers. A second missive from Rome, one of those candid offerings of affection, in the past, that were apt to consist of local "ware" or other contemporary handiwork, had meanwhile reached the correspondent.

*J. R. Lowell to W. W. Story.*

"ELMWOOD, *Sept. 25th*, 1849.

"MY DEAR WILLIAM,—A conversation kept up (as between two deaf persons, with pen and ink) across three thousand miles of ocean can hardly expect the merit of liveliness, however rich it may be in graver elements. It would be a good debating or controversial distance. The long space of time between the discharges of each would allow the smoke to clear away in whose gathering fumes the disputants are apt to forget the original matter of argument. Or perhaps a love-letter, as that kind of composition is singu-

larly retentive of life (witness those of Heloise, in Latin too; witness those of many a defendant in suits for the least defensible of breaches), might carry its vital heat across those weary leagues of salt water as easily as down through dry and cold centuries of time.

"But I am not holding a disputation with you —be thankful for that and read on with cheerful hope. Neither am I writing a love-letter; yet I will satisfy here an emotion which enters into the composition of every solid and honest one, and discharge at least the debt of gratitude, however small the amount of assets may be that remains for the liquidation of my epistolary obligations.

"How did you know anything about it? How did you guess that I had been wishing for one? —that Maria had intended to surprise me with the New Year's gift of a Chinese one, and searched all Boston in vain? Yours came just in the nick of time to fill a gap of which I had precisely then become conscious in the furniture of my otherwise well-treated study. The very cigar I am now smoking came out of its kindly bosom—the hamadryad of that fortunate tree, smacking of Sorrento and giving me a feeling of regard for the olive, a shabby tree in the main and nowise comparable to our elm, and whose

better part we get in flasks and jars. Not so, neither; its fairest use is to be made into boxes with initials tastefully inlaid upon the cover and sent as a memento. Had it been mulberry I might have added *mori*, and given a new turn to that tombstone morality. Think of this if you are sending one to any other friend and give him a chance. I am talking all this time of your beautiful cigar-box. It has given me, moreover, a more favourable opinion of modern Italian art, and so enlarged my mind. Knowing that they had been so long in the habit of getting into bad boxes themselves, I had not supposed them capable of such an achievement. I was not so ignorant of the natural productions of our western world as not to know that all the nests of boxes came from Hingham, and had too rashly concluded that, as the nidification took place there, that was also the singular locality for incubation. But possibly I was wrong in supposing this particular box to be the production of art. Perhaps it was brought into the world by mechanical contrivance, as chickens in Egypt? The egg may have been laid in Hingham and thence exported? I should look upon it with all the more tenderness as never having known a mother's care, and put it in charge of a full-grown Hingham box, which I

have in my closet. But whatever solution of the problem we have recourse to, the box remains—like so many a poor devil's poems—an ornament to the centre-table. I do not scruple to call it the handsomest piece of furniture I possess, except the table Maria made for me.

"There is one of your foreign experiences which I grudge you, only one which I envy, and that is the meeting with F. H. If he be still within reach of voice or letter, give him my love, fresh as ever after so many years' silence—nay, seeming all the fresher, like a flower upon a grave. Yet for that buried friendship I live in the faith of a joyful resurrection—and in the body. Here I sit alone this chilly September morning, with the rain just beginning to rattle on the roof, and the writing of his name has sent my heart back to the happy hopeful past when one was capable of everything because one had not yet tried anything. The years have taught me some sharp and some sweet lessons—none wiser than this, to keep the old friends. Every year adds its value to a friendship as to a tree, with no effort and no merit of ours. The lichens upon the bark, which the dandyfiers of Nature would scrape away, even the dead limbs here and there, are dear and sacred to us. Every year adds its compound interest of association and

enlarges the circle of shelter and of shade. It is good to plant them early, for we have not the faith to do it when we are old. I write it sadly and with tears in my eyes. Later friends drink our lees, but the old ones drank the clear wine at the brim of our cups. Who knew us when we were witty? who when we were wise? who when we were *green?*

"You talk about my being a man of leisure. Why, beside what other writing I have done, I have for fourteen months contributed a column a-week and for four months a column a fortnight, to the 'Anti-slavery Standard'; which is of course advantageous to me, since columns, you know, do not allow poets to be mediocre. You are the man of leisure there in Italy, whose climate makes loafers of all. Now I will give you a commission. Leaving out Dante, Ovid and Boccaccio are the best part of Italian literature. Boccaccio was probably the best *man* of the three, and, moreover, we who have the English tongue derive our poetical pedigree from him through Chaucer. Now you shall make a pilgrimage to Certaldo and make for me a sketch of his little tower, doubly interesting since Landor laid the scene of his 'Pentameron' there. F. H. shall go with you, and as you are both lazy dogs, and F. no doubt fattish by this

time, you shall perform your pilgrimage afoot; and you shall besides compose a *canzone* in alternate verses; your moiety being written in the most toothsome Tuscan and F.'s in the very highest of high Dutch. This you shall engross fairly on a sheet of paper and deposit with the parish priest, directed to me, to await my coming whenever it shall take place.

"I do not know what your movements are to be, nor when you will set your faces homewards. I heard that you intend a journey to Egypt with Uncle Tom. Do not go too far up the Nile. *Ex Nilo nihil fit*—nobody makes anything of it, and beside, there might be considerable risk for Mr Wetmore. There are savage tribes in the interior of Africa who devour white ants, and if so why not white uncles? Do think of this, for it is hardly probable that they are respecters of age or sex. Go rather to London, where there are quarters inhabited almost exclusively by uncles with three golden balls over their hospitable doors.

"It will seem a very old affair for me to speak of the 'Fable for Critics.' You know me well enough to know how it was written—the work (literally) of a few days and without any *malice*. I should have sent you a copy had I known that you were accessible by packages of that kind.

Or rather I should not have sent one—it was so wretchedly misprinted. Set down the parts about Miss Fuller as errors of the press. You speak of her as poor. I did not know that she was so, but thought the departure of her uncle Abraham to his namesake's bosom had made her independent. I only knew that she was malicious, and it was not what she had written of me, but what I had heard of her saying, which seemed to demand the intervention of the satiric Nemesis. You may be sure I have felt more sorry about it than any one; only I always reflect *after* the thing is done. Nevertheless I imagine the general verdict was 'Served her right,' though it was also regretted that castigation was inflicted by my particular hand.

"The only news I have to tell you about myself . . . is that I shall probably make an arrangement with Ticknor to publish a new edition of my poems in two volumes this fall. By this means I shall profit by what I write more than hitherto, which is certainly a desideratum. With an unfortunate faith in my own future appreciation (I believe that is the phrase) I have been in the habit of myself stereotyping my books, so that, although my sale is tolerably large, I have barely more than paid expenses. Under the new system, if I enter upon it, you see that

I have my plates already cast and, the printing being the bookseller's share, whatever profit there is will be clear. Of my 'Fable' three thousand copies were sold as fast as they could be printed, but of that I had given away the copyright. Nevertheless it acted as an advertisement, for the authorship was at once guessed. 'The Biglow Papers' also sold well, but cost me over two hundred dollars in stereotyping.

"I only know a single item of news which you will be interested in hearing. That is the lamentable end of poor Edgar Poe. He was picked up in the streets of Baltimore staggering under *delirium tremens*, and taken to the hospital, where he died. Sad enough and a man of real genius too.

"I look forward . . . to your return home. I hope you will remain fixed in the plan which Emelyn mentioned of settling in Cambridge. Or perhaps we and some other decent people may choose some spot and set up our rests there. At any rate I see no reason why we should not renew a friendship to last as far as the grave at least. I want somebody very much who will not only sympathise with me in literary and artistic matters, but whose early associations were the same as mine. You and I, with our cigars in our mouths, can talk and laugh

over a thousand matters which would seem very poor stuff to most, indeed to all, who had not been actors therein or witnesses."

To cling to Italy, meanwhile, on whatever pretext, is to meet our friends as promptly as possible on their first vision of Venice, which took place, with all the honours of fresh rapture, in the autumn of 1849. They had travelled in the interval, wandered through Switzerland, followed the Rhine and pushed eastward as far as Vienna, but it is all of questionable intensity till they breathe again Italian air. I cannot forbear, however, to reproduce a note or two—if but for mere envy of the old-time freshness of the susceptible traveller's sense, before this freshness had begun to yield in advance, right and left, in every direction, to the diffusion of photography and chatter. At Heidelberg, in September, Story was "never so disappointed in the appearance of any place, and at first thought I must have stopped at the wrong one. Dull and shabby, with one long street running quite through it." But he changes on the morrow, after the castle and the view from the castle.

"We hunted for rooms, as the town this morn-

ing, in the sunshine, looked so much pleasanter than it did last night, that E. has concluded to stay here while I go to Vienna, Venice, &c. After all, when one has great expectations of the beauty of any place, and utterly false ideas in respect to it, the best thing that can occur is an instant and thorough disenchantment at first sight, even a feeling like disgust. *Then* one has a good platform on which to form new ideas. . . . I saw a beautiful little balcony holding out from one of the old walls (of the castle) and through the dark arch looking into the court of sunshine. Beside the columns of the portico were two saddle-horses; the façade, richly glowing in sun and shade, stood beyond; vines waved across the opening; soldiers in groups were spotted here and there; it realised my notion of what a fine old baronial castle must have been—where some lady might look from the balcony at her lover in the court and throw him her glove, or a flower, as he rode off in the morning, and think of him as she paced, all day, the long suites of spacious halls."

At Frankfort the statue of Goethe by Schwanthaler seemed to him clumsy and unfinished. "There is considerable dignity in the head, but the draperies are ropy and unanatomised, and so

unite with the support at the side as to deaden the effect of the figure. The cloak has a put-on sort of air which did not quite please me, and the undercoat and boots were very tinny. . . . I was so very lonely that, after having walked the streets and gazed for some time at the roofs from my window, I grew desperate and went to bed at nine." On which he breaks into the inevitable horror of the German bed of the good old sort. And he adds a page about Danneker's Ariadne, all of the most disapproving, and leaves the figure we must not say not a leg to stand on, but not an arm to lean on. "Nothing *internal* in the work"; which is a suggestive criticism in the light of Story's own subsequent labour. It was for the "internal" that he was himself persistently to try, even as he was so often and so effectively to arrive at it. He believed, ardently, that sculpture may beautifully express it, and it was in the light of this conviction, as well as of others forming its happy complement, that he worked to the end. He takes his way, on this occasion, to Nuremburg and to Munich, noting all he sees and reacting from it, full of impressions, and of ideas about his impressions, hanging fondly over the feast of pictures wherever he finds pictures, airing his freshness thoroughly, in short, in the good old sunshine, in the

German autumn days. At Munich he hears his first German play, and he is always prompt for plays, for which, and for the whole question of the actor's art, in Roman years, under beguilement of the so-oddly theatrified Mausoleum of Augustus or the more private pleasure of staged Barberini saloons, his appetite was never to be sated. "It was stupid enough, but I understood it"—the play at Munich, "turning on the marriage of a black woman and a white man, and I could not but feel how free the audience was of prejudice against such a union." Rather indeed, the earnest, the bland Bavarians! After the play he goes to the great pothouse for supper and is much struck with the Germanic picture. "Here one could see German life—here were truly German groups and figures of every kind of extravagance; some fiercely gesticulating, some stupidly contemplative, some with frogged coats and wild hair, some with moustaches that reached to their ears. Huge beards were kissing each other, great fists were knocking their beer-glasses together, people were shaking up dice in a great leathern bottle. Women waited on us; very friendly and familiar, without any bashfulness and yet quite proper." He hangs about the Munich pictures and spends the rest of the time in writing verses and in reading Macaulay's "His-

tory of England," then gloriously new, "which is as interesting as a novel." He bescribbles very many little pages with a candid and pleasant insistence on the art-things of Munich, modernisms and others—the modernisms mostly already middle-aged, and to be, too composedly, middle-aged for ever only, never to wake up, in their impossible German beds, as antiques: the whole redolent of the unsophisticated time when the art-things of Munich were a theme. They exhale, ever so kindly, one scarce knows what faint fragrance as of our early perusals of "The Initials," of the Baroness Tautphœus, so adored and so forgotten, and of the milder, yet, to the liberal little mind, sensibly haunting charm of Anna Mary Howitt's "Art-Student" at the feet of Kaulbach. The Danube by Passau and Linz reminds him, becomingly, of the Highlands of the Hudson, "though the foliage is not so rich, nor the hills so picturesque, and the great Catskills which loom up along our river were also wanting." At Vienna, where Mrs Story, originally left at Heidelberg, appears, on an altered scheme, to have overtaken him, the theatre prompts him again to reflections. "The Germans, like the English, *over*-act. Nature is not enough for them; it must have a dais and be falsified and exaggerated. How much better the Italian

acting!" That is suggested by some farcical comedies, but he also sees Dawison in Schlegel's translation of "Hamlet"; his note on which combines with other expatiations, those on the Vienna museums, to revive for us the good faith of the young American for whom Europe meant, even more than now, culture, and for whom culture meant, very much more than now, romantic sentiment. He reaches Venice, with his wife and children, on November 5th, by Trieste, and the first assault of the place on his senses and his fancy is, naturally enough, above all the assault of romantic sentiment. Venice was verily made, in the great scheme of things, for this perpetration of the first assault on the recurrent victim—unless we should rather say that the romantic sense was evolved, in the order of the universe, that it should be, in its bloom, assaulted. Story appears to have taken everything in at a gulp; he revolves, like a fire-wheel on a *festa*, at the application of the match.

"All the old life of the terrible republic was here (in the court of the Ducal Palace). Here swept the purple robes of the dread Council of Ten; here gathered the Senators; above, in the palace, were the *sotto-piombi*, where the prisoners of State died; here were the torture-rooms, the

dungeons, the judgment-halls of the Inquisition. And here, where the black coats of hundreds of modern Venetians were moving about, walked the purple and furs and gold of the ancient aristocracy. It was a time for strange imaginations, which came thronging around me. . . . It was like a dream. I abandoned myself to the luxury of visionary enjoyment. As we passed the palace of the Foscari a strain of music came forth and floated down the water; it was magical, it was as if the dance and pageant of old Venice had returned, and almost involuntarily I looked to see the dancers and the shining lights. It was like picture-sailing, like enchantment, so unreal and voluptuous. Under the fatal Bridge of Sighs and over the subterranean dungeons I kept saying and thinking, 'How many fearful crimes, hid from the light, has this fair Venice seen!' The thought of the Inquisition passed before me like a black shadow; I thought of the many who had crossed that bridge from judgment to death; of the secret swords that struck in the dark; of the grave State's enemies found in the dark prisons out of sight of the laughing waves of the Riva, which flickered by and wound their silver nets of light upon the outer walls; of the corpses that had found hurried burial in the canals and lagoons. Here was the nightmare of

the dream. 'And I am now in Venice'—the thought trembles livingly in my heart even as the quivering lights reflected in the canal while we rowed home at dusk. All my memories were a confused cluster of splendours and horrors, as the twisted globes of Venice glass in which are tangled so many various hues. I cannot tell what I thought, but I felt strange feelings."

He ends his throbbing day by the inevitable evening in the Piazza, thronged and brilliantly lighted, and remembers Schiller's "Geisterseher," "while the Austrian band played almost continually. This was luxury." They receive on the morrow "a letter from Margaret Fuller declaring her marriage to Ossoli." They go to the "Hôtel de la Ville"—"anciently the Palazzo Grassi, a magnificent old palace on the Grand Canal, with fine courtyard and hall, and stairs over which all round are frescoes representing the carnival of Venice. Figures in old costumes, masked and unmasked, flirting and mysterious, lean over painted balconies." We hover at their heels; we look through their eyes; there is, alas! no hotel like that to-day. "Near by is an old tower; opposite is the old Foscari Palace." And of course for the pictures he overflows, he abounds. We have, most of us, by this time,

stood before them, stood beneath them often enough ourselves—so often that, with the habit, the power of doing so for others has been enfeebled in us; yet here and there, in my blurred notes, the words glimmer out and stop us. "There is no hesitation of touch"—in Paolo's "Europa"—"but a dash does the miracle. There is no concern about the detail, yet the detail is all there. The bull's head seems as if the blood coursed through it, and the bosom of Europa heaves." On Tintoret indeed he has an odd word—as to "some four" of his "very *clever* pictures." Wouldn't one almost as soon so apply it as to the frieze of the Parthenon? But he has his view. "After the rich openness and freedom of the Veronese, Tintoret always looks to me tame as sentiment and flat in colour. His nature is grosser and his senses less full and fine." However, things but simmer and brew, at the best, in the silver cup of initiation, safe to clarify later in the less brimming, if more precious, vessel of acquired wisdom. Why is it that we also feel, for instance, that he was but to *live into* impressions a little further to become incapable of concluding on them quite so curtly as in his mention of a visit to the great palace of the Bourbons, then occupied with the possessions of the Duchesse de Berri? "Here we saw

a quantity of trashy French pictures, small in size and in spirit, all finished to death. Every room was filled with little knick-knacks of every kind scattered about on the tables or under little cases or in cabinets. One room contained a gallery of second-rate pictures with great names. Behind her bed was a Madonna with a quantity of little gewgaws hung up as an offering. I cannot think a woman whose taste is so small and trifling can have much mind!" He was still in time to see in its original place in the Pisani Palace—a place by which the impression must have been enhanced, though I rest in vagueness as to whether his allusion be to the huge, melancholy pile, all wasted and sacrificed, behind the exquisite Barbaro—the splendid Paolo of the English National Gallery which appears then to have been known by the charming, if slightly inconsequent, title of the Tent of Darius; in connection with which he repeats the graceful legend of the painting of the picture, brought secretly to completion, according to this tradition, in an apartment of the palace in which the artist was at the time enjoying the hospitality and bounty of the Pisani, and intended as an acknowledgment, on departure, of favours received: as we write our name to-day, for example, in the visitor's book. Story applies to

the manner of the present that indicated term "gentlemanly" which falls in so completely with the character of the principal figure in the composition. How, we feel, could the artist capable of such *procédés* not make his Alexander the perfect type, for all time, of the accomplished "young gentleman," and how could the man of the world who was to reflect himself in such an image not have been, inevitably, graceful in behaviour?

Such perceptions, such questions were, visibly, for him, part of the delight with which "one dreams away life here in the mere deliciousness of existence." He dilates on the enchantment, on the "magic," in the slightly *rococo* spirit that we smile at kindly to-day, but that was still, even at that time—certainly for our friends of the tentative generation—one of the keys to the complicated lock, one of the happiest phases of initiation. "Old associations, the splendour and the crimes of the past, strike across the present like the fitful sunlight through forest-trees. The air seems to echo with the music and gladness that filled it in the days of pride. The very names of the old people, which seem so fitted to mystery and crime, to passion and intrigue and love, haunt the imagination." And he enumerates the scenes that, as

in the old melodramas, pass before him—the Venetian beauty, less candid than Desdemona, say, who drops from the Gothic balcony into her lover's arms at night. "I see the gondola silently steal along beneath the balcony while the guitar-string is lightly touched to awaken her to whom the lover sings. Before me the dagger of the cloaked bravo or of the jealous husband gleams, and I hear the splash of the body as it falls into the dark canal." He sees, in fine, what we all used to see, or what was obligingly seen *for* us (for consequent clearing of the air); that operatic side of the picture in which the idea of "crime" recurs very much as one of the indispensable rhymes of the libretto. The recurrence is, however, quite apart from this, an interesting mark of that special turn of Story's artistic imagination which was to make him, as sculptor and poet (in his Medeas and Judiths, his Cleopatras and Stephanias, his Roman emperors and Assyrian kings), strike with predilection the note of passion let loose. It was in their dangerous phases that the passions most appealed to him, and, with his predisposition to see sculpture as, above all, expressional, he recognised betimes, in a country where the breath of the centuries of violence was still in the air and where the fancy could still so taste

it, his strongest affinities in the matter of subject. So the lingering *lurid*, in Venice, did more for the charm than, taking one kind of rococo with another, the ghostly grimace of the Carnival.

It was just such visions, none the less, that he immediately proceeded to quench by a step rather obscurely prompted for us, unless indeed we read into it, a trifle "pathetically," just the least natural reasons. We make out, at all events, in doing this, that his plunge into Berlin, for the winter of 1849-50, would be exactly the most heartrending obligation that could fix its teeth into the tender conscience of a precursor not as yet fully in tune with his mission. Nothing, in other words, could be more charmingly characteristic of the old precursive spirit while at the stage of *tâtonnement* than to have imagined such a sop to an unbridled æstheticism (an æstheticism not simply of thought, but of life and act) as a period of discipline in the unregenerate Prussian capital. The lamentable logic, so to speak, lives again for us, and we see the odd part played by this episode in the particular pilgrimage that was to qualify the pilgrim for "Art." It was to qualify him for art as a consequence of qualifying him for culture in general, which might be looked to, under Providence, for keeping art in its place. Con-

sidered therefore in its calculated bearings on this latter result, the Berlin months reflected in our friends' memoranda and letters round themselves as a passage of the pleasantest comedy. Story, as we patch it up, had not, curiously enough, even after two years of Italy, burnt his ships; he was to saturate himself, to the end that he might happily model, with what Europe should give him, but he was somehow, by the same stroke, and in some interest to be felt better than named, to be protected against the saturation. He was protected so far as Berlin went. He returns with his wife to Vienna, and they take, by rail, the plunge, which they find attended, in the infancy of the process, by the discomforts of a ponderous slowness of trains, of interminable waits, of wretched nocturnal and otherwise mistimed changes, of a universal density of smoke in carriages closed to any air. "Somewhat it has [Berlin] that makes me think of Boston and gives me a home-feeling. I know not what it is; not the buildings, for in vain we seek there for such noble structures — the Schloss, the Guard-house, the Arsenal, the Opera — which line the fine street Unter den Linden. But there is a sort of comfortable look which resembles Boston, even as the hurry and vivacity of Vienna

recalls New York. The climate is our New England climate, and to-day particularly a true Massachusetts day. I saw a chaise in the street just like a Boston doctor's chaise—the first I have seen since I left America." And he sees, he finds, an added reminder in the look of the Berlin interior, even to the papers and carpets of the rooms, "the sofas and furniture"—which is a side-light, or, in the modern phrase, a "back-hander," of some intensity, for the eye that summons up, through the historic perspective, these purely Prussian accessories.

But there were better things, including the soul of music—always, for Story, the greatest luxury to spirit and sense. "In the evening we heard the 'Marriage of Figaro' at the Opera—full of liquidity and melody, running singing along like a brook, abounding in delicious themes that enchant the sense and in deep, pure, prayer-like strains that ravish the soul. Mozart's music has a lark-like thrill, a wild and simple naturalness beside which Rossini's seems affected and artificial. I felt my heart smile, as the Germans say, during the whole performance. The Prince of Prussia was there; he came into his box, pulled out a little comb and brush and began to make use of them for his hair before the whole audience. This is a peculiarity of the Germans

everywhere—as soon as they enter a public place, a café or a dining-room. The Princess was also there, but I saw nothing in either face in the least interesting. He has a big, full, snub-nosed countenance, and she a shrewish." And Mr and Mrs F. of Boston were also there—or were at least in Berlin. "The former is a stick and the latter too weeping and woman-like." Another notice of the Opera yields a deeply disconcerting allusion to a ballet, called prettily "Die Blumen-Fee," the Flower-Fairy, "in which Marie Taglioni, a woman whose ankles were as great as her name, flung herself about clumsily enough." But for this untoward stroke we might have invited Marie Taglioni to flit across our stage, on the points of those toes that we expected never to see compromised, as one of our supernumerary ghosts: in the light, that is, of our own belated remembrance, a remembrance deferred to the years in which, as a very ugly and crooked little old woman, of the type of the superannuated "companion," or of the retired and pensioned German governess, she sometimes dined out, in humane houses, in London, and there indeed, it must be confessed, ministered not a little to wonderment as to what could have been the secret of her renown, the mystery of her grace, the truth, in fine, of her case. Her

case was in fact really interesting, for the sensitive spectator, as a contribution to the eternal haunting question of the validity, the veracity from one generation to another, of social and other legend, and it could easily, in the good lady's presence, start a train of speculations—almost one indeed of direct inquiry. The possibilities were numerous—how were they to be sifted? Were our fathers benighted, were ravage and deformity only triumphant, or, most possibly of all, was history in general simply a fraud? For the Sylphide had been, it appeared, if not the idol of the nations, like certain great singers, at least the delight of many publics, and had represented physical grace to the world of her time. She had beguiled Austrian magnates even to the matrimonial altar, and had acquired, as a climax of prosperity, an old palace, pointed out to the impressed stranger, in Venice. The light of testimony in the London winter fogs was, at the best, indirect, and still left the legend, at the worst, *one* of the celebrated legs, so often in the past precisely serving as a solitary support, to stand on. But to read, after all, that she flung herself about, with thick ankles, "clumsily enough," is to rub one's eyes and sigh—"Oh history, oh mystery!"—and give it up.

Story gets over, meanwhile, his sense of Bostonian analogies — "I find the furnished apartments here 'very tolerable,' as Dogberry says, 'and not to be endured.' They are senselessly arranged." The Opera becomes apparently his main consolation; he sees "Don Giovanni" in Italian, again delights in Mozart— "throughout there is a dramatic power as well as a melodic sensibility which make this opera the greatest ever written"; and he overflows, on another occasion, about Gluck's "Armida"— "in the scene in her garden, where Rinaldo falls asleep, the music is exquisite; the wind instruments breathe like soft airs, the stringed instruments keep up a gentle rushing and murmuring as of brooks and leaves." The theatre, indeed, seems less sustaining. "'Romeo and Juliet,' in Schlegel's translation, at the Schauspielhaus, wretchedly performed; the Juliet a stick, the Romeo nothing, the Mercutio swaggering and ungentlemanly, and the nurse terribly over-acted. Love at first sight, such love as grows in the South, were utterly impossible in such cold-blooded creatures." He meets "a thoroughly New York merchant, with that kind of pretentious off-hand style of treating all persons and subjects. Mrs J. was also there with the daguerreotype of J. ('Don't you know J.?' said

the New York merchant with an air as if not to know J. argued one's self unknown. 'He is of our firm—J. & Co.') Mrs J. sang, 'Is it *but*—a dream?' and a German sang with her from one of the Italian operas, he singing the words in French and she in English!" This at a party given, as I take it, by the then American Minister. He sees "Don Giovanni" again, and again overflows—"the very Shakespearism of music; the greatest opera, for everything, I have ever heard. It gives the trashy libretto the glory the sunset gives a damp dull cloud." He speaks, however, in the same way, journalising for two pages, about Mendelssohn's "Midsummer Night's Dream:" "Then last came a fine 'Hochzeits-Marsch,' broad, noble and rejoiceful. This seems the true translation of Shakespeare into music; the 'Othello' of Rossini, the 'Romeo and Juliet' of Bellini, are beside it nothing, mere sound and fury." After which he enters an odd judgment: "Read 'David Copperfield' and found it exaggerated and not very interesting. I am tired of Dickens; the stream seems dry and the style is forced." And he follows it up, on the occasion of reading Victor Hugo's "Derniers Jours d'un Condamné," which he apparently finds more interesting, by three pages of reprobation of capital punishment and judicial murder.

Throughout this winter he was studying German with a certain Dr Stadthagen and attending lectures, on History, the Civil Law and other matters, at the University and, incongruously enough, cultivating the practice of sculpture, though we do not discern that, on the banks of the Spree, he had a studio. His wife notes on February 12th that "W.'s statue is already beautiful," but the matter fades into mystery. The statue in question would seem to be the figure modelled as a memorial of his father and afterwards so successfully finished, were it not unlikely that he had transported this work from Italian to German air. He to some extent gives an account of himself in a letter which I shall presently quote; but the impressions there commemorated needed evidently such further propping as they might borrow from a few rather jejeune "social" contacts.

Mrs Story notes a party at Mme. von Savigny's, "where we had a pleasant, though rather stiff evening; the ladies scrupulously sitting down on one side of the room while the gentlemen as scrupulously crowded together on the other. William's sketches were there, and they proved the centre of interest for the evening, one old dowager after another passing them on and remarking upon them. As soon

as the first carriage was announced the whole party took leave as by the wave of some fairy wand." They were most occupied, really, in learning the meaning of Heimweh — of which sentiment Boston was not the object. "I sat alone," Mrs Story writes of one evening, "and read Andersen's 'Improvisatore,' and I found it so interesting in subject as well as fascinating in style that I could scarcely make up my mind to lay it aside and take my solitary cup of tea. How attractive and beautiful seems from this northern distance every spot in Italy! Even the meanest little post-town through which I have again passed this evening with A. has a charm, a picturesque nameless grace that is to be found nowhere else. With Goethe I went to Venice the other day, but he is too cold for Italy; warmer natures are better companions there. In a gondola he is out of place," she quaintly adds, "notwithstanding his great artistic genius." Toward the end indeed, weeks later, she wishes to be just all round. "I begin to feel unpleasantly when I think of leaving Berlin. It is cold, prosaic and in some aspects dreary; its social life is narrow and contracted; but it is the home of scholars and philosophies, and its air has some of the enchantment that they have lent it. I like to think how good

an atmosphere it is for thought and study—and I can *feel* even that, slight as my application is. When therefore I look at my things, which ere long must be packed and carried out of the house, I grow a little sorrowful, and a little affectionate even toward our greasy Frau Rosener." The vision that was to remain most vivid to her was clearly that of Bettina von Arnim, the child-friend of Goethe's old age, in relation to whom her diary contains, under date of January 25th, an entry so animated that I fully reproduce it.

"Mme. von Savigny having called to tell us that her sister Bettina (who for a few days had come to Berlin) would like to see us, we embraced the opportunity to go to her. She was not in the city proper; her lodgings were just beyond the Thiergarten and but a few moments' walk from the Brandenburg gate. We took a carriage to go to her, but left it to walk upon the snow. In front of the house were large trees whose branches swayed and sighed in the January wind. Having been directed to the first floor, we mounted and knocked, and a clear voice from behind the glass door presently called out to know whom we sought. Being answered, the door was thrown open, and Mme. Bettina

stood there to welcome us. Most kind and cordial and hearty was her greeting. Mme. von Savigny had already spoken of us to her and we did not meet as strangers. After some slight difficulty in opening the door of her little parlour, we were soon seated within and on the most friendly terms imaginable. She spoke freely of herself and friends, but not obtrusively; she became sad on speaking of the condition of political Germany, and referred to the heart-rending tragedy of the Hungarians. But these things she did not dwell upon, for she knew that William was an artist, and art being most near and dear to her, it was most natural to make it the burden of her song. She was full of nature and enthusiasm, and as she became interested in conversation seized my hand, pressed it and kissed me. There is something strangely magnetic about her, and I felt wonderfully fascinated. Her eyes are fine, large and deep-seated, her brow is nobly developed and her expression full of fire and genius. I had expected to see her in some odd costume, perhaps with her grey hair streaming down her back, but she was quite simply and neatly dressed, with nothing in her appearance either unfeminine or untidy. Something there is in her fine eye that seems to penetrate and read the heart,

and as she looked at me and spoke with me, as she did most affectionately, I can scarcely express how near I felt to her.

"She showed us her designs for the bas-reliefs intended for four sides of the base of the statue of Goethe; in conception and spirit they were and seemed quite like the work of inspiration. In execution they were very remarkable, considering how late in life she had begun the mechanical part of the art. We asked her when the statue would be erected, and she sighed and said: 'You in America must take it in charge now; there is no longer any hope of it here, I fear.' She said also that at one time before the late revolution in Berlin the King had sent to ask her to give him the designs and allow him to have them executed. Dear as the object was to her she could not sell her freedom of speech, and did not wish to receive such a favour from his hands as should bind her to a sort of friendship with him, or at least keep her silent when he was in error. So she said No, and all the world was surprised that she should, seeing the darling project so nearly accomplished, reject the offer. But she simply said: 'I prefer to keep my freedom and to speak as I think of the King.' She had once occasion to apply to him for the life of some prisoner. She asked it as of one who had

power to grant it. He replied: 'You deny us the possession of kind feelings, and then in an emergency apply to us as having them.' She answered: 'Of what consequence is it who asks you or what are my sentiments? You must simply look at the thing itself and see if it be right to do.' The King said: 'But a friend of the prisoner has told me that he is an infidel, speaks ill of Christ, &c.'; on which she replied, 'The charge against him is as true as that the informant is his friend.' The man lives, but it is, as Mme. von Arnim says, rather through the influence of the Queen than of any one else. During the conversation or correspondence, whichever it might have been, the King said: 'But the power of pardon no longer remains with me; I have given up the case to others.' She said in reply: 'Then you have nothing left, for that power is more than crown or kingdom to you.' Her daughter came in, and I turned to talk with her in my bad German. I found her simple, natural and naïve, and liked her; but the mother was ever more attractive to me, and I listened to her words whenever I might. About her books she had a long talk with William, and told him that 'Mrs von Otis' came to see her when she was here and promised to see that her edition of the letters to Goethe were sold in

America, and that the money which was to go toward the erection of the monument should be sent to her. She had up to this time received neither money from the sale of the books nor any word about the matter from Mrs von Otis. She had heard that there was an American edition and wished William to inquire about it. She was to leave town in a day or two, but promised to come and see us and give us her books. Then after a long visit of three hours we took leave of her and trudged home through the snow of the Thiergarten to the babies and the Persian poets. She did come to us" (Mrs Story adds as a kind of postscript) "with her arms full of books, and took off her bonnet, and stayed some hours, talking as fast as possible."

As for Story himself he was to leave a record, sufficiently compendious, of what Berlin had to give him; the interest of which, again, must plead for its length.

*W. W. Story to J. R. Lowell.*

"Berlin, *Jan. 30th*, 1850.

"My dear Jim,—Your letter from Elmwood, dated some day in September last, had not the same disinclination to travel that possesses *you*. It spent nearly two months journeying back-

wards and forwards, between Vienna and Venice, to each of which places it made three or four visits before it could make up its mind to come to me in Berlin. At last, however, about a fortnight since, it abandoned the occupation of wandering Jew and, worn direfully by travel, much battered and over-scrawled, arrived at 9 Schadow's Strasse, 'eine Treppe hoch,' the present den in which we are domiciled. Yet the prodigal, for all its wandering, had lost nothing of its welcome; it was warm and *geistvoll* as when it left your snug room at Elmwood, and a shout of gladness hailed its arrival. For a time we were with you as we used to be in staunch old New England; the wind was in the great elms, and summer and youth in our hearts. I longed to stretch out my hand to you, with my heart in it, and unburden my soul, and claim your friendly sympathy, and sail down into the past with you along those shores so beflowered with happy memories. Yes, happy, though to me so sad. I must ever ferry across the dark river of death in order to enter into the elysium of youth beyond. We have now arrived at that point—I at least have—where I find myself looking backward oftener than forward, and I doubt if life ever will render an equivalent for what it has taken. . . . Sometimes I think—

it is a dream, but a delightful one—that nothing could be so satisfactory and so easy as that we should make a little colony in Rome and there live in that old old home. Of all places in the world it is the true spot for us. I cannot tell you why it so haunts me and taunts me. But ever my heart goes back there in my dreams, and the thought of New England life cuts across me like a knife.

"It was truly a joy to me to meet Frank Heath, and to meet him and be with him in Rome. He was to me all that a friend could be, so genial a presence, so unselfish, so noble, true and simple, that the old affection which always lay in my heart for him grew deeper and more vital with our renewed intercourse. His nature is so smooth and equable and deep that he was a constant consolation to me. I am irritable, quick, harsh, and am easily annoyed, but I could live for ever with him. Your commission to him and me to make a pilgrimage to Certaldo how gladly would I perform! But here I am shivering in Berlin, and Certaldo is away in the south, and I hear no toothsome Tuscan here, but only the rattling of the German cart-wheels. I am in F. H.'s old tracks, and his friend Dr Stadthagen is my German master. As we drink our beer at Kneip's the Doctor recounts to me the

vagaries of F. and we drink his *Gesundheit* with clinking glasses. I have for some weeks been a real student, and devoted myself to German, and attended the lectures, and sat on the student forms, and felt again as I did in old Harvard. The sensation with which I first entered the lecture-room was as if time had slid off my back and I was a boy again. I know not whether you will be interested to hear about any of the noteworthies here, but I venture to give you a sketch of some of them. And first for Neander, their great man, in whom also your father will be interested.

"As you know, he is a Jew, and, as you don't know, is dirty and careless of externals. Small, with black clotted hair, very heavy, shaggy eyebrows and purblind eyes which seem never to have been used in seeing, he is completely absent-minded and abstracted from the world. He knows nothing of life or nature, cannot attend to his personal wants and necessities, can scarcely dress himself, and has been known to come into the lecture-room in his drawers alone. Some very good stories are told of him in this respect—of which take this as a specimen. One day he went home and complained of being lame, saying that he had hobbled all the way along the streets. On being asked if he suffered pain

he said, 'No, I feel no pain, no soreness anywhere, but I *am* lame, for I hobbled all the way home.' His sister examined him carefully and found no injury, and a physician was called, who punched and twisted the poor old man all over, but to no purpose—he could find nothing wrong Still, Neander insisted that he was lame and that he *had* hobbled. All were in perplexity till some one who had seen him returning solved the mystery by stating that he had walked home with one foot in the gutter and one on the sidewalk. His style of lecturing beggars description, and it at first struck me as so ludicrous that I confess to have not been able to be decorous. He has a high desk, reaching about to his neck, behind which, when he enters the room, he suddenly darts and disappears, so as to be visible from only one side. Leaning one elbow high up on the desk, he steps back, crosses his legs, droops his head down beside it lower far than the surface, seizes a quill which is always prepared and placed there, and twisting this round and round with both hands just about on a level with his chin, and tilting the desk so that one is in constant fear of its falling, commences his lecture—every sentence beginning with a spasm which convulses his whole body, stiffening it sometimes for a moment into a nearly erect

position. His hands clench and his frame is in a paroxysm, but gradually, as the sentence proceeds, his body relapses and droops lower and lower, until at the middle of it he has regained his original position. His voice also accompanies this convulsion, loud at first and then lower and lower, until at last the conclusion of the sentence is utterly inaudible. There is a pause, he twirls his pen violently, spits five or six times, and then there is another convulsion and a second sentence. He literally punctuates his lecture by expectoration—once for a comma, twice for a longer stop. As he stands crouched down beside the desk and tilting it forward with one leg tied in a knot round the other and a long frock-coat coming down below his knees and swaying to and fro, he is certainly one of the strangest of spectacles. His lectures are good, though repetitive and technical. He likes, as all the Germans like, to use their magnificent metaphysical vocabulary, and very frequently they keep saying over the same thing in a different manner and without really adding to or developing the subject.

"I have also been hearing Ranke, whose style is the acme of flippancy, without dignity, grace or intelligibility. He is a little round-faced man, with a baldish forehead, a high voice and thin hair; his head just appears above his desk, and

he rolls himself round, looking up at the ceiling and jerking out with the extremest rapidity and nonchalance, and in a most equivocal tone, which one knows not whether to take as jest or earnest, little fragments of sentences. If Neander always seems to be drawing his ideas out of a deep well, Ranke seems, on the other hand, like a garden fountain which keeps spurting up little futile jets and then stopping. Von Raumer I likewise have heard—dull, dry, hard in manner, and his lecture consisting of the dry bones of history. Rudorf on the Roman Law gave us a catalogue of acts and laws without the least development or explanation; I should have thought it impossible to be drier had I not heard Raumer and some others. Waagen on Art was the stupidest old plodder I ever heard; nothing at all did he give us but a series of facts, and in the most mumbling, slovenly manner. Ritter, the celebrated geographist, I found interesting; his lecture was devoid of all grace and delivery, but it was interesting and full of knowledge. Michelet, in Political Economy, was really clever and also amusing. I do not believe at all in this system of instruction. The professors year after year repeat the same lectures. It seems to me the relic of a past age, when books were rare and what the professors gave orally was no-

where else to be found. The Germans are learned not in consequence, but in spite of, this system.

"Now I am on these old worthies let me add to my catalogue a few others out of the University, whom I have met and whose acquaintance I have made First there is Von Humboldt, truly a noble old man, full of knowledge, of a calm clear mind, of great capacity and of very equally-balanced powers. His knowledge is immense, even in respect to the most trifling subjects, and I was astonished, in the interview I had with him, to find that he knew everything in relation to our country, from the beginning to the end, in great and trivial things, as thoroughly as I did imperfectly. Common men I had never heard of, acts of our Government unknown to me, adventures of insignificant travellers, details of the gold mines, facts relating to the geology of every different portion, &c., all were to him 'familiar as his garter.' He is now eighty years of age and has a beautiful head and brow—full, expanded and open. He kept up a continual gush of talk from the moment I entered his room till I left it.

"Von Savigny, the celebrated jurist, I have seen repeatedly, and I can assure you that he is of all petrifactions the most remarkable I

have seen. He is as dry as dust. Very courteous and affable and complimentary I found him, but living wholly in a book-world, and that book-world a law-book-world. He held up both his hands when he found out that I was an artist, and cried out, 'What, an artist and a lawyer? That is impossible!' But if he is dry, so is not Mme. von Savigny, who is lively, vivacious, chatty, elegant, and of great simplicity and kindness of heart. I always devote myself to her, and in return she introduces me to Gräfins with ugly faces and unpronounceable names, while the other men herd in one corner of the room, dressed in black and speaking monosyllables. It is odd that we are obliged to go to these parties in mourning for the Queen-Dowager of England. We have serious thoughts of inviting Lord Westmoreland to dinner with our landlady for cook. She is a creature only to be found here—with the dirt an inch deep all over her and the colour of her dress not to be distinguished below the incrustation of the same. We live here in the most simple and the least luxurious style—with two dinner-plates, at the most, alike, but not even two tea-cups. We help ourselves to soup with a tin dipper. We have our gravy in a cup. We have one tumbler that holds a pint and one that holds a quarter

of a pint. When we came our landlady proposed to us to have our bedclothes and linen washed once a-month, and she offered us a towel a-week apiece. I have a big pudding-dish to wash in, with one bottle of water for my allotted quantity in connection with it. . . .

"We have become acquainted with Bettina von Arnim, who is just what you would suppose from the 'Conversations with a Child'—just so artless, plain, wayward, simple, frank and poetic. She received us in the most friendly manner and, taking Emelyn by the hand, said, 'You are beautiful. You are lovely.' At which we laughed, and then she said, 'Is not that English?' She kissed Emelyn and then shook hands with me and asked 'if I was for Liberty.' I cannot describe the conversation, but, generally, she talked about the King, and the horrors of the Hungarian war, and the suffering of many nobles who had been basely betrayed, imprisoned and robbed of all their fortune. She spoke of art, showed me her designs for her statue of Goethe, and said that the King had wished it to be made, but that she had declined because it would fetter her speech. She also told us the history of her book—how she had refused to write it until permission should be granted to her to say all she chose, how this *was*

granted, what a stir the book made, how it was condemned by all as improper to be written to a king (they are so servile here), and how the King said it should not be suppressed, it was laid at the footstool of royalty with so childlike a frankness. We talked about the æsthetics of art and agreed upon them, and she showed me her statue of Goethe, which she herself modelled and which is very clever, far better than Schwanthaler's at Munich."

## V.

### RETURN TO AMERICA AND TO ITALY.

They left Berlin the middle of March, and early in the June of that year were in London, having spent part of the interval in Paris. If we view them, with interest, as suddenly steeped in that medium of overflowing "town" which they were not then or ever after to find, like that of the social Berlin, "narrow and contracted," and if I rescue from the "dark backward," with all sympathy, such scraps of their experience as the record yields, it is because the gentle ghosts (almost alike gentle now) here indeed begin to crowd, and the human, or at all events the personal, picture to thicken. We are substantially met, in Mrs Story's journal, on the very threshold. "Mr Parry's in the early evening. Mrs Procter's at 11 for an evening party. Crowded day!" To which the diarist adds (July 8th) in reference to the young, the delicately charming, the doomed first wife of

her husband's closest friend: "Maria Lowell's birthday. When I thought of this my heart was on the other side of the Atlantic." Mr Parry evades me, fortunately for my space, but Mrs Procter, wonderful lady, never evaded any one, and becomes again, at the first touch, the most vivid of presences. The Storys were to meet her often in the future, and they now saw more of her, as we shall presently see They appear also, by the same token, to have seen not a little, at this time, of one of the interesting men from her so largely, so impressively contemporised relation to whom, an inordinate backward reach, she herself borrowed interest, as she borrowed it from many sources. "Early dinner and a long evening in Leigh Hunt's library"—which would seem to mark the shade of change in that matter of manners on which we keep our eye. Who in London, in 1903, makes dinners early in order to make evenings long in any one's library? So, similarly, "Went to 142 Strand to see Mrs Horatio Greenough." Who stays to-day, and when July comes round, at any number whatever in the Strand? "Dinner at Mr Prescott's," who can only have been, I surmise, the historian of Cortez and Pizarro. "This we found so agreeable that we spent the evening also with him and talked

over our various English experiences." At present, when people dine, they do, as a matter of course, spend the evening — unless they be going somewhere else; and this especially if they be gathered Americans with English experiences to talk over. *That* theme of colloquy, at all times, *that* medium of exchange (for the thought of it becomes lively as we trace it back to its possible beginnings and early stages), is certain to have, by its many-sided charm, on such occasions, carried any company far. "Went in the evening to the Opera and heard 'La Tempesta' and one act of 'Anna Bolena,' in which Pasta sang." And Mrs Story mentions that Mr George Peabody, whose great memorial image her husband was, in the years to come, to seat so solidly in the shadow of the Royal Exchange, "sent each of us" (for there was some other lady) a beautiful bouquet; jotting also, as if with more to say about it, "Pasta's singing and acting." But the comment, alas! has dropped out, and we are without the impression. What does remain, attached to this entry, is a little note: "5 tickets, 7s. 6d." From which we gather that it cost in that happy day but that modest sum—and it is a question evidently of the stalls—to partake, in this order, of supreme satisfactions.

And the satisfactions, verily, abounded. "Went with Mr Chorley to a morning concert at the Opera and heard Pasta, Castillan, Viardot, Tamburini, Mario, Ronconi and Grisi, besides the finest orchestra I ever listened to. W. went in the evening to see Rachel." They dine with "Mr Black," who also looms up for me as one of the hovering shades—a friend of Italy and of art, a friend of Rome, of Florence, of Americans, of F. B., of many persons, the light legend of whom, holding it only by hearsay, I rather fear I have lost. I cannot deal with Mr Black, though our friends deal with him frequently and pleasantly enough. They note an evening at Dickens's, as well as a visit to Carlyle at Chelsea and to Leigh Hunt at Kensington, and they mention another evening at Mrs Procter's. It is difficult, on meeting the marked figure of this latter lady again in our path, to resist the temptation to enroll her in our little company of the appealing and the evoked—or easy at least only because, somehow, her strong personality, than which none was ever, in any way, more impatient of attenuations, breaks, even overmuch, through the rank. One would like almost to feign, on behalf of our friends, for the pleasure of seeing her image respond to the overture or the pretext, a closer connection with them than

appears to have existed; and this because, among other reasons, she strikes us as having been—for what she personally and socially was—singularly uncommemorated. No sign more striking could there be, I remember thinking at the time of her death unhonoured and unsung, that no footprints are sharp enough for the great high cold London tide not to wash them away without a pause. It is not of course literally that song should have dealt with her, or that she was a name to prompt the elegiac note; but that she was in an extraordinary degree a subject for portraiture, which approached her no nearer on any occasion than if it had been as afraid of her as an afternoon caller whose welcome was uncertain or his place in her drawing-room indefinite. Yet even to skirt her no more closely than we are doing now is to wake her up. Whatever may have become of her spirit, it has never, we feel, consented to death; it revives at any mention, just as, we are sure, it must have resented the unmannerly omissions. She suffered the direct pencil-stroke, or something in the nature of it, to my knowledge, but once—when Kinglake, dedicating "Eothen" to her, addressed her as "Our Lady of Bitterness"; and her humorous acceptance of that title, under which she had never winced—under what indeed

*had* she winced?—was to become precisely one of the strong marks of her aspect. Step-daughter of Basil Montagu, the most accomplished editor of Bacon prior to Mr Spedding; widow of Barry Cornwall the poet, the intimate friend and the biographer of Charles Lamb; mother of Adelaide Procter the poetess, the ornament of anthologies when anthologies are not, as we may say, pedantic; friend of a hundred eminent men and perpetuator, for our age, of the tone of an age not ours, she requires, no doubt, some introduction to a mistimed generation. Introductions of Mrs Procter, however, are difficult; they were in her lifetime all but impossible; they assumed ignorances on the part of others, just as they assumed preoccupations on her own, that were, on the whole, less of a nature to clear the air than of a nature to cloud it.

For the present perhaps too easily and too variously solicited chronicler she had at all events, as an admirable friend, during her latest years, a value that he always qualified, to himself, as historic; and not at all, moreover, in the comparatively superficial sense of her associations and accretions, her extraordinary names and dates, her long backward span and her persistent presence, but in the finer one of her being such a character, such a figure, as the generations

appear pretty well to have ceased to produce, quite as if the technical secret of the "paste," like that of some old fabric or mixture, had been lost to them. "There are no more made"—that might well be the answer given across the social counter to an inquirer curious of reasons. It was her tone that was her value and her identity, and that kept her from being feebly modern; her sharpness of outline was in *that* in the absence there of the little modern mercies, muddlements, confusions and compromises. English to the core and thoroughly of her class, of her social affiliation, infinitely humorous and human, with perfect distinctness of wit and dauntlessness of opinion, a partisan to her last breath (which meant, on her part, an admirable constancy of favour and of its opposite), she testified somehow to a stouter and harder world than ours, an order more decreed and accepted, one in which the temper had had more at once to give and more to take, more to reckon with, but also more, within its rights, to maintain. Mrs Procter's rights were, to her own view, of the sharpest, but they included, delightfully, the right to be, however inconsequently (if that was the only way), pleased; which she employed with the finest effect. I remember her once telling me, in answer to some question, after Dowden's Life of Shelley

had come out, that she recalled, from her girlhood, an occasion on which Leigh Hunt had said, in her father's house, that he was going up to Hampstead to see what Shelley's "new wife was like"; and that she also recalled his saying, on her asking him, at the next opportunity, for news of his errand: "Oh, she's like a cross baby." This reminiscence, I further recollect, had been determined by my asking her if she had known Mrs Shelley on the latter's return to England. "Oh dear, no—one *didn't* know her; she wasn't received": that was a picture, I recall, precious for the old tone. But it was on my marvelling, a little irreflectively, at the antiquity of her having had such an acquaintance at her command, that she had said, "Oh, that's nothing —for going back," and then had gone back to the grey eld that was so much anterior to Shelley's death and *a fortiori* so much anterior to Byron's. I retail this anecdote, however, precisely to emphasise my point that, interesting as her anecdotes might be, her attitude and her spirit (facts quite as definite, and certainly quite as "quaint" as her anecdotes) were things more interesting still. More even than the anecdotes they seemed to make a light, as to the social world which had been not as ours, on the question of human relations. If one arrived at something

of a sense of such relations one sniffed up the essence of history—to which in the absence of that sense one remained blackly a stranger. And it glimmered before one as something the precious possession of which might bring one nearer to the ancient reality. Without it one was, at any rate, in respect to any reproductive grasp of the ancient reality, a "muff." All this, however, is a far cry from the fleeting vision vouchsafed to our friends in the summer of 1850 —albeit, at the same time, that connections are not wanting. There was, for instance, no more "regular" friend of the trenchant lady's final period than Robert Browning, who was also, with a deeper shade of intimacy, an ally (as we have seen him already begin to be) of the Storys. She was, in addition, thoroughly well-affected to Lowell, who was equally so to her; and these facts would have in some degree constituted a relation with her, her friends not being non-conductors, for others, so to speak, of her relation to *them*. This last truth, I may perhaps add, is lighted for me, with some intensity, by my own last reminiscence: a grey, wintry day and the company, in a mourning-coach, during slow funereal hours, of Browning and Kinglake, my companions of the pilgrimage. That was an occasion, verily, for as fine an appreciation of

shades of intimacy as one might have cared to attempt. Browning was infinitely talkative, and Kinglake, old, deaf, delicate, distinguished, perfect, infinitely silent. Mrs Procter, whose displeasure he had incurred, had not spoken to him for a quarter of a century. She was magnificent.

Story and his wife, who had spent the summer in England and Scotland, were in London again, the same year, early in the autumn. Let me not omit, in reference to the interval, a short entry in Mrs Story's diary at Edinburgh on August 6th. "Came home to find letters and the saddest of all news of Margaret and her child and her husband. How deeply I felt it, how sad I was made, I cannot here say; but pale was the sky, dull the face of nature when I thought of the friend I had lost. Of course we were in no mood to meet our engagement, but stayed at home to be alone and write." Then a little later: "My mind, last night, was so filled with thoughts and memories of Margaret Ossoli that I found no refreshment even in sleep. The vision of her as I saw her last on the steps of our house, and the memory of those troubled days in Rome, kept coming back to me, and I felt so deep a sorrow that I could look neither before nor behind." They had had, on the other hand, in the country,

some measure of the society of one of their American friends, not the least valued or distinguished—and far from one of our ghostly chorus, happily, he—Charles Eliot Norton, of Cambridge, Massachusetts, whom we shall, to our advantage, meet again. It is from the September days in London that Story's long friendship with Robert Bulwer Lytton, the late Lord Lytton, whom we shall also meet again, was pleasantly to date. "Found at Kenyon's John Forster and Maclise. Forster told me that a son of Sir Edward Bulwer wished to go to his uncle in America and asked me to take charge of him; to which I willingly consented. He also invited me to dine with him and meet Bezzi, Kenyon, &c., on Wednesday week." Sir Henry Bulwer, afterwards Lord Dalling, was then British representative at Washington, and the Storys' first stay in Europe was drawing to a close. He goes to see his friend Black, of the Italian days, who offers him, out of "pretty little gardens, some wall-fruit, nectarines, of high flavour," and gives him occasion, in the house, to observe that "one of Landseer's pictures looked strangely out of place between [copies of] Guido's and Guercino's 'Auroras.' The English school," he adds, "looks hardly respectable beside the old works of the masters." Harkening, as we must, for the lighter

notes of the time, we cull that one as we pass; finding perhaps another as well in the fact that the amiable Mr Black presented E. "with a beautiful papier-mâché portfolio." There hangs over the day, partly from these matters, the sense as of old suburban September Sundays in a more golden air than ours. "Walked to Clapham with Black to see George Catermole. We had a pleasant walk of five and a half miles and passed by Clapham Academy, where Hood went to school, and Black went also, and which is now an orphans' asylum. Catermole I found a most agreeable full-natured man, mild and humoursome in conversation, and with a peculiarly oldish choice of language." He notes a few contacts with celebrities not of the first order; he goes to see Frank Stone; he dines again with Black, in company with Catermole, "who fell foul of the Transfiguration and said many severe and true things about it"; he reminds himself of anecdotes, rather faded now, of Hogan, the Irish sculptor, of Forster, of Dickens: the golden air, the September suburban Sunday hang over it all.

He dines with the then little American world of London, and lays the foundation of the friendship that was to be the most valued of his life and to constitute for him, in after-years, a close

tie with London, with England; a tie never strained, though again and again tested. These were the early years of the long residence in England of his loved and honoured countryman the late Russell Sturgis, afterwards senior partner in the house of Baring Brothers. The weak wand of evocation rises of itself, I feel, to play over Mr and Mrs Russell Sturgis's name, their aspect, their so involved connection with this record — over the large, bright, comprehensive story of their career, character, hospitality, general bounty and benignity. The subject has— and would have for many a memory beside my own—a noble amplitude; but I am conscious that it need not be, of deliberation, in relation to our other matters, brought in; the deliberation would have to be, much rather, to keep it out. Story dines with John Forster and meets Talfourd, "a thinnish, smallish, hard, wiry man, very ambitious and spasmodic, and, though nice, limited and wanting the freedom of genius. Certainly, however, with the keenness of polish and education. Not an elegant man at all, nevertheless, and ate with his knife. Mr Justice Hardwick, Bezzi, Kenyon, who drove us there, Maclise, a quiet, ratherish dull, but pleasant, fellow, and Forster himself, a jovial roaring blade. We discussed Webster's case" — that of the Harvard

professor who had startled the world just then by doing to death a Boston physician and cutting up and burning his body: the first "murder-case," of public interest, projecting its red light, at that time, into the consciousness of small American partakers of the shocks of their elders. Story retails some of the talk at Forster's dinner. "Hardwick told of Turner that, on a fishing excursion, when there was a fine sunset and his companions, studying and delighting in the splendour, turned round and looked for him, they discovered him seated with his back to the view and picking shrimps out of the lap of an old woman. Forster showed us a beautiful letter from Hampden to Sir John Eliot in the Tower. Landor had a similar one, and, on my saying that our language seemed not to have its old elegance, Forster said: 'Charles II. and his age spoilt the language. As soon as a grammar is printed in any language it begins to go. The Greeks had no grammar when their best works were written, and the decline of style began with the appearance of one.'" He devotes several little pages to an excursion to Knole with Black; he goes, for the first time, to Oxford; on September 28th Sir Edward Bulwer calls, with Forster, to present Bulwer's son. But his face is turned homeward; the spell is broken; I find under date of October

5th: "Off from Liverpool; bright day. Forster went down with us to see us off." In respect to which I am uncertain if the record should stand that the biographer of Goldsmith and Dickens made with them for that purpose the then so long railway journey from London. People do not, nor ever did they, assuredly, go "down" only to Euston. Forster's company on the way is eminently, delightfully credible; it is simply that, on the other hand, we have on our mind his lonely return. Still, it was even then a stouter age than ours. The ship of our friends was, auspiciously — if not indeed, as more promptly determinant of reactions, ominously— the *America*, and they passed Cape Race (oh the memory, as through the wicked light of wild sea-storms, of those old sick passings of Cape Race!) on October 13th.

Story mentions, in a statement from which I have already quoted, that on his first return to Boston he remained there "eight months"; this, apparently, however, was not exact to within a few weeks, inasmuch as toward mid-summer of 1851 he had still not taken his fresh departure. He had exhibited to those concerned his matured design for his statue of his father, which had been viewed with favour; he had again, nevertheless, with some incongruity,

renewed vigorously his connection with the Law, and he took up in particular, at this time, the preparation of his father's Life. In respect to which, and to many other things, I must again profess my inability to encounter a letter of Charles Sumner's without yielding to the desire to reproduce it. His letters prompt that disposition, in as marked a degree, though not on the same ground, as Lowell's. The grounds in question in the two cases differ, in fact, I think, diametrically. Irresistible in Sumner is the way he gives himself out, irresistible in Lowell the way he (with a still greater abundance, still more expression of it) keeps himself in. Sumner, writing on July 4th from "the steamer for Newport," had been reading with Story the proofs of the Life. "I have read two, which I received just as I was leaving Boston, and I shall direct them to you at the Nahant post-office. So, if you have not received them, please call there. Do you not seem too much to apologise for your father's early confidence in Humanity? My faith in this is so constant and fixed that I think him more right in those early days than in his later life. Who can doubt that hereafter, and before not many years are passed, we shall all regard distrust in the Future of Man on earth as little better than Heathenism?

The Future is secure; the Present alone is uncertain. Study the proofs well." From another friend meanwhile Story had also been hearing.

*Robert Lytton to W. W. Story.*

"WASHINGTON, *March 10th*, 1851.

. . . "The so-called gaieties are over, everybody going away. In a week or two there will be nobody in the streets but the cows, and they look as if they would like to go too if they could. In the meantime I remain learning order and large text-hand in the Chancellerie, and my ambition oozes out at the tips of my fingers; for it is easy to make fine day-dreams and think about fame or fortune as if one had the future in one's pocket—but so hard to realise them, and the way seems so long, and we go with such little steps. For my own part, seeing the knaves and fools who get the great prizes in the lottery, and the wise and good men whom no one knows anything about, I think I shall be content, like Horace, with my salt-cellar, and laugh at all the rest of the world who bustle out of life as if they could not get rid of it quick enough. I have heard of a Secretary of State who was asked why he did not promote merit, and replied, 'Because merit did not promote me!'—and I think that

is just how merit gets kicked out of the way by men who get on not for their good but for their bad qualities. . . . I heard from my father that there is going to be a dinner given to Macready and he is to take the chair; Dickens too will be there. What are you doing in Boston? It would give me great pleasure to have a letter from you, with all the news, at least such as relates to your circle. There is so much I would wish to have said to you and heard from you while you were here, and it seemed so short a time. Are your old recollections of Washington sufficiently vivid to compare them with your last? and does it not strike you that here are social phenomena wholly unlike anything else in this or any other country?

"It reminds me of a picture I remember having once seen in which the hares roast the cooks and the horses ride the men; a sort of *bouleversement* of every existing state of things. For here are young ladies who seduce the men, sometimes under promise of marriage (that is, if heiresses), and old fellows who play the *joli cœur*, and young men who marry and live steadily and wear spectacles, and sham Juans and sham Haidees talking sham sentiment. But no one who stays long here could, I think, help liking Washington,

for there is so much *laisser aller* and such a fund of kindness and hospitality. Then too it is the focus of so much intellect, though an idler like myself sees more of the 'young and thoughtless' than of the grave and reverent seniors. And as for variety, it is a sort of continual Pentecost, with 'Turks, Jews and dwellers in Mesopotamia all speaking one tongue.' Clay has been making some somewhat fiery speeches, which I think rather unworthy of him. I cannot but think it bad taste even in one who has so mighty a prestige to keep crying out, 'I am Sir Oracle, and when I ope my mouth let no dog bark!' You will have seen Allen's (?) attack on Webster, which I am glad to see has met almost universally with the scorn it merited. I know of no more news. An Hungarian lady who was Kossuth's *aide-de-camp* has arrived here and created some interest. You see the Government is going to send out a ship to bring him over here. I hear from this person that the Russian influence is so great at Constantinople that he is now in great danger. I don't know how I shall ask you to pardon me for having bored you thus long, but I write to make you write.

"*P.S.*—News! news! the Government is out! Am I not a good prophet? Did I not say this

would happen while you were at Washington? I hear it is not to be a Peelite Government, but Sir James Graham as Premier and Lord Aberdeen for Foreign Affairs. I wait with the utmost impatience to see which lot, for good or bad, we over here shall get out of the raffle. . . . What a singular thing it seems, the sudden break up of the Governments over Europe! The Spanish Ministers have been turned out, and General Narvaez is an exile at Paris. The Belgian Government too has just gone out of office. The French Ministers have all within the last few weeks shared a similar fate, and now the Whigs have crumbled away at last at home. So, while the slides shift in the lantern, we, the children, stare at the picture as they pass and laugh or cry as our humour suits us. Well, better do that, I cannot but think, than be the gentlemen who manage the lamp and burn their fingers!"

It would take us too far, unfortunately, to read a little between the lines of the foregoing and try for a moment to win back a vision of the "old" Washington of those years; the Washington of long "before the war," of a political and social order that has passed away, and—as it has occasionally lived again for us in anecdote and

echo—of an incomparable *bonhomie* of provincialism. It was the Washington, as we so see it, of an almost paradisiacal ease of intercourse, of an unblushing ignorance of cold conventions, of a winning indifference to imported standards; the Washington of the Southern ascendancy, the Southern luridity, but also, we must suppose, the Southern sweetness, as the special field of the "Southern belle"; the Washington of evil roads and early springs and shabby houses and short purses, of a more obsequious "niggerdom" and of an uneradicated prejudice in respect to that convenience. It was doubtless, with its queerness and its anomalies, as of a great gay political village or crude civil camp, the Washington evoked for me long ago in the talk of an old foreign diplomatist who had served there in his younger time. "Je vous assure que lorsqu'on sortait, le soir, de dîner chez le Président on trébuchait sur les vaches couchées à la porte." This indeed was probably when one had dined thoroughly well. We must, however, but sigh and pass. The situation in Boston, at any rate, appears meanwhile to have been that, having undertaken to prepare a new edition, already invited, of the law-book he had published before his absence, Story had his task to achieve, which he did excellently, working against time and

ripening for a real rupture. The book in question, "Contracts," had reached by 1874 a fifth edition. It speaks unmistakably of his various ability and facility, the mental agility, the insistence in the direction of the hour, with which his life, his talk, his work and his play ever abounded, that he could keep himself in two such opposed relations at once, could take hold afresh even while really giving up, and give up even while really taking hold. This was to show in him as markedly later on, during the time of his second return, when he again simultaneously took hold and gave up—all of which, however, only characterised his variety. Of all victims (so far as victim he was) of the famous "artistic temperament," he was the least detached from other cares of the mind. His æsthetic sensibility, active as it was, was not a jealous, not an exclusive housemate. His mind begot ideas about everything, opinions, convictions, things that at the moment were passions; which things, in their turn, kept him perpetually at the pitch of communication, expression, discussion. He spent his life in the happy condition of never being without a *subject* (for affirmation, irritation, emphasis, for free development of some sort), there being one or two—such, for instance, as his inexpugnable view of the French nation,

French scenery, French products and characteristics, of whatever sort, a view that fed, in an odd but traceable way of its own, on his great love of Italy—that might have been noted as keeping him company most of his days: a provision for our happiness, in general, it may be said, than which fate makes none better.

If, at all events, he was, during 1851, as I have hinted, ripening for a real rupture, the rupture shows as real enough in the next of his letters. There are none before me that take him up at a shorter interval; there is only the legend, preserved in his house, of the intensity, the ineffability of the joy with which, in the September of this 1851, he found himself approaching Genoa from the sea. He had embarked, at Boston, with his wife and children, on one of the old sailing-packets, the *Kepler*, and it was part of the legend that the captain of this vessel always spoke of Civita Vecchia, one of its usual ports of destination, as "Vetchy-Vatch"—his seamanship being supposedly better than his Italian. Our friends, however, for some reason, quitted the ship at Gibraltar and re-embarked for Genoa; a touch or two more, in relation to their journey, still clinging to the legend. Or I should perhaps say, rather, that it is I who still cling to any touch—any echo

of an echo, for instance, that shows us, no matter for how few seconds, something of the old, the more human, way. They had got at last to "Vetchy-Vatch" and thence taken *vettura* to Rome; where, by night, Mrs Story sat in the carriage waiting while the exhibition of their passport went on in the neighbouring guard-house, or whatever, to which her husband had carried it, and whence she saw him, in time, return escorted by two gendarmes and two candles. He had shown first, with some effect of mystification, his old passport, the one prepared for his former visit; but he was provided with a second, in which (as apparently not in the other) he figured as Esquire, to the final illumination of his companions, in whose faces, between the candles, apprehension was seen to dawn. "Ah, Esqui-*re!* Re degli Esqui—sua Maestà!" with deep obeisances and a prompt liberation of the vehicle. It was not, as entries into Rome go, one of the least effective. But this is the next letter.

*W. W. Story to J. R. Lowell.*

"Castel Gandolfo, *July 8th*, 1852.

. . . "Well, from the Alban Mount I hail you. We are perched just over the lake, with the vast sweep of the Campagna stretching out

from our feet and the old castello looking grimly down over the Pope's gardens opposite. We have taken the Villa Ceni and we are here with Cass,[1] or rather he is here with us. A villa more to my mind, as far as the house goes, I have not seen. Every bedroom free, a magnificent salon, sixty-three feet long and twenty-five high, with a billiard-table at which I spend quite a third of my time playing with Cass. Then a grand dining-room and a beautiful loggia, looking over lake and mountains and Campagna. And three handsome girls, with their mother, are in the *mezzanino* below and are 'so sociable.' I would that you were here to saunter with us in the grand Barberini villa, with its grove of pines, or to drive (for Cass's carriage is here, stabled below, and always at our command) through the galleries which lead off in all directions, or to make excursions to Gensano, Lariccia, Itri, or heaven knows where. Cass really walks, by the four or five hours together, and abjures carriages while we are here. We find him very pleasant, not obtrusive, and though not genial (that's beyond his nature), agreeable. His wonderful stock of stories is never empty, and I have had an opportunity of verifying some which were exceedingly

[1] General Lewis Cass, 1782-1866.

ill *trovati*, and been obliged to reserve the proverb. What we don't believe amuses us as much as what we do—perhaps more; and we have never found them untrue where we had an opportunity to know.

"Thank you for remembering the messages and inquiries in respect to a marble worker. Powers is in a fog as to all persons' interest except his own; in respect to the latter it is always clear day with him. I am glad, however, to know that he has ceased to trouble himself about my marble, as I shall now look out for it myself. It is quite preposterous to tell me that, had he wished, he could not in *four* years have obtained a block for me. He promised with such earnestness and so repeatedly to do this thing for me that I believed him—more fool I. . . . During our last days in Rome we had the glorious illumination of St Peter's and the Girandola on the Pincian—the latter of which we saw from Cass's windows. On St Peter's Eve were *vesperoni* in the great church by both choirs, which were very fine. The old bronze San Pietro was robed in a splendid costume with the triple crown on his head. Flowers heaped the altars and were scattered on the pavements and the whole well, where is Canova's kneeling Pope, under the balustrade of chandeliers, was

exquisitely mosaic'd with the richest flowers. This ceremony was not among the humbugs. Crawford has returned and is now making a small model of his Washington monument. Tell Page he must come here next winter. No place is like Rome; I have seen them all and I know it. Florence is nothing but a Continental Boston in its spirit."

Such a letter as that, or as another, of the end of the same summer, with which I must follow it, is, besides being delightful in itself, delightful also in proportion to any old memories, impressions, visions of one's own, that one may read into it. And what indeed may the lover of Italy, the survivor of changes, extinctions, young intensities, the spirit haunted by the sweeter, softer, easier, idler Rome, the Rome, so to speak, of greater and stranger differences—what may so fond an embroiderer *not* read into almost any faded sketch in which there are enough of the old elements to "compose"? One can in any case but speak for one's self, and in some cases, doubtless, even, be able little enough to give connections and reasons. Why for instance does it minister to tenderness, to wonderful little images, but all merely melancholy and merciful (so that they are droll as well as grave), to

caress, as moving in these scenes, the fancied figure of the well-marked General Cass, who becomes interesting, or at all events vivid, among them, precisely by reason of his incongruity? Rich and curious, for that matter, would probably be, from beginning to end, the series of portraits of the diplomatic representatives of the United States at foreign Courts up to the time of the Civil War—especially as presented in the general diplomatic picture. The *effect* would probably always be there—the effect as we see it produced by General Cass in the Roman ilex shade, among the watching blank-eyed busts. To the strong, special, unusual nature of this effect, establishing altogether a new measure of character, attitude, tone, and many other matters not insusceptible of deterioration by flatness, the jaded senses of potentates and premiers must, on the whole, have owed a refreshment that was none the less real for not having been registered in protocols and gazettes. Incontestably, we must add, the American imagination, engaged with these pictures, does not yearn for a sallow senator, either square-chinned or lantern-jawed, as a *contemporary* contribution: we melt over the phenomenon only as we see it conditioned by time and distance and by the consequent accessibility, in us, of the romantic spirit. I

seem, exactly, to see it so conditioned in a document, as I am tempted to call it, that is before me as I write—a photograph of the admirable statue of General Cass produced, for a public position, by Mr Daniel French, a master, in his art, of character. The massive, large-headed, dress-coated American statesman of our early day stands there planted on his feet with convincing truth and yet with an aboriginal erectness and dignity that has been paid for in no concession to statuesque grace. This personage, we feel, has for the pedestal of his monument the "floor of the House," and never was better rendered that manner of resting on the legs which defies the push of parties. General Cass, so preserved, rests on *his* for ever, reducing time itself, in its certainty of not making him budge, to a sense of political feebleness. Didn't he wear, in the Roman summer mornings, the dress-coat, blue with brass buttons, of his effigy; didn't he hang about in it in the Barberini gardens, and wasn't he there, with its aid, in the *villeggiatura* season, of a rich exoticism of aspect that the Swiss Guard of the Papal villa alone could rival? We fondly build upon it; we fill in the picture with more touches than I have room for; the historic sense insists and persuades. I feel indeed in still another connection that

there is no keeping it down. It prompts me to record how one of the survivors of that season, then a very small child, remembers having been, during the previous Roman months, "in a little blue frock," taken by the kind old representative of her country to call, as it were, on the Pope at the Vatican; so that, meeting his Holiness afterwards in the gardens of the villa, where she and her brother were allowed to play, she enjoyed the benefit of her introduction. One day, while they were, with their nurse, in one of the galleries of shade that lead to Albano, they met his Holiness taking a walk; which gave the nurse—a thrilled Irishwoman from the States—the opportunity to kneel and kiss his hand. My informant has not to this day forgotten the penetrating Papal smile. "Ah then, you're not little Protestants to-day!" Such things ought doubtless to be trifles to the historic sense, but I feel that in this general connection there is no point at which it can be brushed away. Melting to visions and memories quite independent of those I have just noted, I wander again myself in Barberini gardens, I hang, at this villa, from the windows of the painted *sala*, from between the arches of the loggia, over wide Campagna and deep Alban lake; I partake of hospitalities more recent and never forgettable; hanging too,

very much as with the other contemplations, over the cradle of a work of literary art, a work itself all richly reflective of the conditions (and now well open to identification),—a work, in short, which was to enjoy a splendid maturity. But these are perhaps too many meanings to read into the single letter I have cited; so that I make haste to prop up my case with another. Lowell had spent in Rome the winter of 1851-52, and was supposed by his correspondent to be in England and on his way home.

*W. W. Story to J. R. Lowell.*

"*Sept. 20th*, 1852.

. . . "Such a summer as we have had I never passed and never believed in before. Sea and mountain breezes all the time, thunder-showers varying with light and shade the Campagna, donkey-rides and rambles numberless—a long, lazy, luxurious *far niente* of a summer, such as you would have thoroughly enjoyed. And how often have I wished to have you here; what excursions might we not have made together into the Abruzzi, where I long to go; what games of billiards at home! All that I wanted was to have some old friend with me. As for heat, we have not felt it; there has always been a breeze, and in the long, shady

galleries roofed over by ilexes one can walk even at noon for miles. Just now the Pope is here and all is *festa*. Every day he makes a new excursion with all his *cortége*, and every town he visits has a rumpus to receive him. You cannot imagine anything more picturesque than all these mingling costumes and bright-coloured crowds and fairs such as we saw at Gennezzano, with sales of squash-seeds and pigs stuffed whole and *ciambelli* and spring-knives and false jewelry and glaring bandana handkerchiefs; with spouting fountains and almond-eyed children and cleanly-dressed girls crowned with the white-peaked *tovaglia*. Up at the castle *portone* stand the striped Swiss Guards with their long, glittering lances, and the square is gay with soldiers and *canonici* and *monsignori*. When the Pope rides, or drives in his great gilt coach with his four black giants of stallions, what kneeling to his benediction as he enters the square, while tapestried hangings wave from the upper windows of the castello and boys cling to the gratings of the lower! And the band bursts into a clash of music, and the organ inside the church, which is strewn with flowers and box and lighted with pyramids of candles, groans and thunders softly. I never tire of these doings. Then the dancing to thumping

tamborellas, and the laughter and gaiety and screaming, are really reviving. But why talk of this to you? You saw enough of it to spur your imagination at Gennezzano. . . . You never were *here*, were you? Poor fellow, been to Italy and never saw Castel Gandolfo! How will Gurowsky[1] growl, aiming that fatal eye over his nose at you, when he hears this! You had better swear, when you return, that you *have* been where the descendants of Æneas's old white sow and thirty pigs, now coal-black, ramble round the streets and are tied out to posts, and where, with exquisite felicity, to the accompaniment of squeal and grunt, they snarl themselves up with the legs of the donkeys that come to visit them and are screamed and howled at by a score of ragged boys.

"In a fortnight we intend to make a mountain excursion for a few days, and then shall return to Rome, where we have taken a beautiful apartment in Piazza di Spagna, 93, just opposite to Hooker's Bank. I am anxious to be at work in my studio, which is now completed uniformly with Crawford's. You see your grand schemes about the Palazzo Albano have fallen to the ground; but we like our new quarters

[1] Count Adam Gurowsky, 1805-1866, Polish author and revolutionist, long resident in New York and Washington.

better. They are more fitted to our republican condition, although perhaps even they are a little too florid. How we shall miss you and M. in the winter evenings! There is nobody to supply your place. . . . Since we have been at Castel Gandolfo we have seen only Italian friends, some of whom we find very pleasant and *simpatici*. Frank Boott writes me from Florence that he is preparing an 'Inno' to contend for a prize offered by some musical academy there. This however, I suppose, is a secret. He calls Rome by all the bad names he knows, and yet I'll engage that he longs to be back here. Crawford swears boldly to us that it is ridiculous to go out of Rome into the country, that he and his family find the villa (Negroni) good enough for them — to which the gentle Watson sings a feeble echo; but at the same time sweet Mrs C. confides to E.'s ear that Crawford is determined never to spend another summer in Rome, because he thinks it wears upon the constitution. At the Correa is a circus, and during the summer I have heard some admirable playing from a new company of actors.

"Your motions have been so erratic lately, and we have been in such confusion as to your whereabouts and whatabouts, that I have not sent you the letters of introduction that I prom-

ised. But herewith I send one or two, and could send more but that I doubt whether you can establish yourself for a year or two and we can go to the East together and make pilgrimages to the many nooks and spots of Italy which both of us have left unseen. We must take some untravelled paths which the English have not spoiled, and go into the wildest fastnesses of the Abruzzi, perhaps to Sora. Every day that I live here I love Italy better and life in America seems less and less satisfactory. All that I want here is a few old friends. I've sealed these two notes to Forster and Leigh Hunt because I have availed myself of the occasion to write more than the introduction, and also for fear that they may not arrive in time to serve you."

A letter of the following winter to the same correspondent, and in no less "launched" a strain, must speak for itself save in so far as we are able, dotting a few of its *i*'s, to clear up a dimness or two.

*W. W. Story to J. R. Lowell.*

"Rome, *February 11th*, 1853.

. . . "Here the winter until the last week has been almost fabulously fine—clear, sunny,

and so warm that as yet we have had no fires until the evening. The grass is as green as in the spring, the birds sing constantly in the open air, and already the trees are putting forth their blossoms. But the Carnival has been a decided failure. It was so broken up with intervening *festas* that one never got into the humour, and the weather was quite unpropitious. For the first time almost for a year we had four or five days of rain—which meant mud and soiling of pretty *contadina* dresses. I sought out our handsome *contadina* of last year, but she was not to be found. Another very pretty one gave me one day a jumping-jack and a Roman smile, which were both highly satisfactory. We had a balcony under Clarisse's, and I longed for you and sulked all day at my studio because you were not here. If one could get rid of the ghosts of old times would it on the whole be an advantage?

. . . "Apropos of which you are creating at this time a furore at 28 Corso—W.'s harem (scarem) as I call it—among the emancipated females who dwell there in heavenly unity; namely, the Cushman, Grace Greenwood, H., S., and Co.; not forgetting the Bayne, who is here without her antidote. And for fear I should forget them, let me tell you of them. They live

all together under the superintendence of W., who calls them Charlotte, Hatty, and so on, and who dances attendance upon them everywhere, even to the great subscription ball the other evening. Hatty takes a high hand here with Rome, and would have the Romans know that a Yankee girl can do anything she pleases, walk alone, ride her horse alone, and laugh at their rules. The police interfered and countermanded the riding alone on account of the row it made in the streets, and I believe *that* is over, but I cannot affirm. The Cushman sings savage ballads in a hoarse, manny voice, and requests people recitatively to forget her not. I'm sure I shall not. Page is painting her picture. He is well and happy and delights in Rome, and I am glad enough to have him here. He has made some very fine copies from Titian which I suppose you have seen, and is now Titianising the Madonna della Seggiola. Frank Boott is also here; I told him when he returned to Florence that he would repent, and so he has. There are a great number of Americans here this winter, but I have kept out of American society, having exchanged it for Italian, which I find agreeable. My life has been very uniform. In November I began on my large statue of Father, and it is now about finished. Before this letter can reach you it will

be in plaster. My marble for it is also purchased and my *abbozzatore* engaged, so that there will not be a day's delay in carrying forward the work. I am also putting into marble by bas-relief 'The Flight of Youth,' for F. S. My next work will be the Arcadian Shepherd Boy in large —so much for *me*.

"I have been so consumed by interest in my statue that I have been nowhere and seen nothing by day. The Barberini faun still spouts his fine column of water into the sunshine, and I stop every day as I walk to my studio to admire it. In about nine weeks I shall be at leisure and mean to go into the mountains that seem to woo me to them as I see them in the distance whenever I drive out on the Campagna or over the Ponte Molle, as I frequently do after the day's work is over. The more I live in Rome the more I love it. All that I want is a few choice old friends, and especially do I long for you and Frank H. How you would have enjoyed this divine winter here! Do come back. . . . For Dr Hosmer I did what I could, but he did not like to be done for. I got Miss Hosmer a place in Gibson's studio, but W. took the credit of it. Miss Homer is also, to say the word, very wilful, and too independent by half, and is mixed up with a set whom I do not like, and I can there-

fore do very little for her. She is doing very well and shows a capital spirit, and I have no doubt will succeed. But it is one thing to copy and another to create. She may or may not have inventive powers as an artist, but if she have will not she be the first woman?"

Ghosts enough, verily, with a little encouragement, would peep out of the foregoing: I feel indeed that were I to take an unconsidered step to meet them they would fairly advance upon us in a swarm. Old manners, old fashions, old standards, old provincialisms, prejudices, innocences wrap them about, after all, with the kind historic haze—leave them, for the most part, "funny" but vague, as we find the portraits, the contributions, the verses, tales and other ornamental literature, in turning over the back numbers of superseded magazines. Story's "Hatty" is of course Miss Harriet Hosmer, the most eminent member of that strange sisterhood of American "lady sculptors" who at one time settled upon the seven hills in a white, marmorean flock. The odd phenomenon of their practically simultaneous appearance would no doubt have its interest in any study of the birth and growth of taste in the simmering society that produced them; their rise, their prosperity,

their subsidence, are, in presence of some of the widely scattered monuments of their reign, things likely to lead us into bypaths queer and crooked, to make us bump against facts that would seem only to wait, quite in a flutter, to live again as anecdotes. But our ramifications might at such a rate easily become too many. One of the sisterhood, if I am not mistaken, was a negress, whose colour, picturesquely contrasting with that of her plastic material, was the pleading agent of her fame; another was a "gifted" child (speaking by the civil register as well as by nature) who shook saucy curls in the lobbies of the Capitol and extorted from susceptible senators commissions for national monuments. The world was good-natured to them—dropped them even good-naturedly, and it is not in our fond perspective that they must show for aught else than artless. Miss Hosmer had talent (it would be to be remembered that her master, John Gibson, dedicated her to renown, were it not that John Gibson's own renown has also by this time turned so to the ghostly), and she was, above all, a character, strong, fresh and interesting, destined, whatever statues she made, to make friends that were better still even than these at their best. The Storys were among the friends—my memory of later Barberini days, Barberini dinners, testifies

to that, as well as to the more mature, but no less prompt, wit of the lady. My memory, if I may continue to press it, testifies also, in its degree, to the once great "actuality" of Miss Cushman, though not as to her Roman time nor as to her part in private life. When I wish to feel ante-diluvian I live again over a small incident of childhood—very young childhood it must have been, contemporary, quite, with the prehistoric, that is with the palmy days, as I take it I ought to call them, in New York, of the old Park Theatre. I recall the bent heads of two small boys, extracting of a winter's night, by the lamp, till nine o'clock, from such auxiliary fiction as was proper to their years, the fabled "lessons" of the morrow, and then the sudden infinite widening of this little lamplit circle, to soul and sense, through the irruption of the most generous and most impulsive of parents, who, present, that evening, as one of the parental pair, at one of Miss Cushman's moving performances, and impressed with its probable still greater impressiveness for the candour of childhood, had driven home, at a rush, from the far "down town" of the Park, to snatch up and carry off my elder brother.

This as near as I came in infancy to seeing the celebrated actress in "Henry VIII."; I was to

wait for that privilege to a much later time, the short period of her melancholy reappearances, impoverised and infirm, within a year or two of her death. But the scene, that evening, at which, through my being inadequately estimated, I did not assist, is one of the most ineffaceable in my tolerably rich experience of the theatre. I recall it as a vivid vigil in which the poor lonely lamplight became that of the glittering stage, in which I saw wondrous figures and listened to thrilling tones, in which I knew "Shakespeare acted" as I was to never know him again, in which, above all, I nursed my view of paternal discrimination. Miss Cushman's career, properly examined, would probably vivify for us some of the differences, for better or for worse, between the old theatre and the new. Markedly destitute of beauty or of the feminine-attractive, and thereby reduced to the interpretation of a small number of parts, she had yet found it possible, by the simple aid of intelligent art, the austere charm of "thoughtful acting" unenhanced and (save by other thoughtful actors) unsupported, so to "draw" as to have amassed in no great compass of time a considerable fortune and to have been able to retire with it to the easy winter watering-place that Rome had already then become, or rather had not yet ceased to be. It

was interesting, I remember, on the *other*, the long-subsequent occasion, to get the measure of the potency of mere premeditated art—from which there has consentingly remained with me but the recollection, however, of great beauty of voice and tone. To these were to have been added, I believe, as an element of the prime, some special mastery of the romantically gaunt and grim—if this be in fact the property that such successful efforts as her Meg Merrilies and her Nancy Sikes, in the emaciated versions, respectively, of Scott's novel and of Dickens's, may be conceived to have had in common. Whatever they had, are we not, with our eye so restlessly on the history of taste, rather left wondering at this *reine de théâtre* whose queer little kingdom, yielding a princely revenue (as the theatre of that age went), consisted of the three heterogeneous provinces of Queen Katherine, Meg and Nancy, to which might be added the outlying insular dependency of Romeo? And since we are asking such questions may we not also wonder to what particular barbarisms of the present such barbarisms as the "Guy Mannering" and the "Oliver Twist" of the early Victorian stage would correspond? Have we, after all, for platitude of poverty, anything to match them? I can myself dimly remember the early Victorian

"Nicholas Nickleby," with the weeping feminine Smike of the young actress who was afterwards to become Mrs Charles Mathews, and the sense of incoherence, the flop and flutter as of perpetually-shifting canvas, that could disconcert even the sharp appetite of childhood. I believe, to be just to Miss Cushman, that she had been known to play Wolsey as an alternative to her Katherine, as she had been known to play Juliet as an alternative to her Romeo. It is all, however, a little gruesome, so I hurry on.

I hurry, if it may so be called, but, with our restless eye, not too fast also to pause an instant before the literary, the social shade of Grace Greenwood and the memory of the odd association that, for a young imbiber of her friendly prose and verse, could cling to her elegant name. One knew it was somehow not real—wasn't it in fact too beautiful to be? yet why then, if feigned, an adoption of the funereal note familiar to New-Yorkers of the tenderest age in the style and title of their great suburban Cemetery? One had a vision, I believe not incorrect, of a marble brow, of dark sententious eyes that were like the inscription on the fair slab, of drooping ringlets that were like the gentle mortuary willow. A sense, further, of that incipient discrimination which is the soul of criticism attached itself to

the intelligent consciousness that Grace Greenwood must be somehow finely differentiated from Fanny Fern, a contemporary New York glory; difficult though it might be to decide, for preference, between the two lovely names, one so sweetly, majestically sad, the other fairly inviting you to tumble with its bearer in the woodland undergrowth. Fanny, assuredly, was not Grace and Grace was not Fanny—a perception of which truth (at a season of life when confusions do occur) may well have represented, in a small mind, the earliest stir of literary discernment.

To what degree was that faculty concerned with productions, with other and more eminent shadows, evoked in the next of Story's letters that I am able to quote? I must presently try to say, mentioning meanwhile that I must let the interval here jumped account, easily enough, for itself. After the winter of 1852-53, spent in Rome, he had again, for the summer, gone into *villeggiatura*. The malady of travel was in those days, blessedly, a milder fever than now, when that noted "whip in the sky" which good Bostonians used to be prone to acknowledge in another connection has reached its climax of agitation. Spoken of, anciently, by an acute member of that community (a member too of our own present circle and a particular friend

of our friends), as the suspended *fear* in the old, the abiding Puritan conscience, the lash cracked by the New England Jehovah about the ears of all plodders on the path of conduct, it is now more than ever in its place, only applied, as would seem, with a different intent. The image holds generally, at any rate; the whip in the sky descends on the backs of those who happen not to be "going" and makes it a necessity that they go. Where and why have ceased to matter; we move, with scarce a question, to the arbitrary lash. From the Italian sky of those days the whip was, in respect to all of its functions, blissfully absent; the journey northward, for the summer, was long, arduous and costly; people moreover who were there for love felt a scruple at leaving Italy when Italy was most Italian. They went nearer, and fared no worse; they did, in the time, by way of refreshment, what they could; and for proof that their experience was easily not to be wasted for intimacy, for intensity, curiosity and beauty, we find ourselves referred, it is scarce needful to say, to some of the rarest promptings of the muse of Robert Browning. Our friends were not all Brownings, but they were almost alike deep drinkers of the summer-sense of Tuscany.

*W. W. Story to J. R. Lowell.*

"BAGNI DI LUCCA, *Aug.* 10*th*, 1853.

. . . "Your letter was brought to me by a smiling penny-postman in a tawdry chapeau. I was then alone in Rome, living with Crawford (both being temporary bachelors), and your handwriting looked so like you, so friendly and so redolent of old days and home and Cambridge, that when I read it I felt half-way between tears and smiles. How I longed to have you again on this side of the water! How indeed I always long for you and Frank. What is there that supplies the place of old friends? After reading your letter I slipped off the covering from your bust and placed it in its best light and stared at it a full quarter of an hour—after having lighted a *baiocc'-e-mezz'* cigar. I confess to having had a severe twinge of conscience that the bust still stood in the studio. It ought to have been in Cambridge before now; but I only finished my father's statue in time to allow me to complete the Piper by strenuous working before the summer heat, and as I could command no workman sufficiently trustworthy, I was obliged to postpone the bust until I could return in the autumn. Then I will finish it at once and send it off to you. Indeed it is almost finished now. I thank you for your kindness in

inserting the complimentary paragraph about my statue of Father in 'Putnam,' and though I have not seen it I have no doubt that it is better than my deserts. I do believe you will like it despite its faults, and I really think that it is not stupid. I am waiting to find an opportunity to send a photograph of it to my mother, and when that arrives it will give you some idea of the mode in which I have treated my subject, although a very imperfect and unflattering one. This, by the way, reminds me that Macpherson has taken out a patent from the Papal Government for a new invention by which he lithographs and engraves photographs, making the sun itself engrave on the stone and copper. The Government has after examination granted him a patent. This makes Mac. look up in the world, and he grows his hair and beard six inches longer in consequence.

"We are all at the Baths of Lucca now, high up on the hills, amid the thick chestnut-trees, retired from the bustle of the Ponte below, where gossip simmers round the café, and we are leading the most *dolce far niente* of lives. The place is beautiful. All about us tower the mountains, terraced with vines and noble groups of chestnuts, and through the valley below sings our mountain-brook river as it sweeps under its

one-arched bridges, turns picturesque mills, and goes winding along through its rocky bed to the Mediterranean. Every evening we drive along the richly-wooded banks of the wild, roaring Lima, or else beside the rushing Serchio, where Shelley used to push his little boat, to the Devil's Bridge. I have never lived an idler life. While the wind blows through the windows coolly we sit and read and fall asleep over our books — and feel intensely virtuous when we achieve a letter. Of society there is none we care to meet but the Brownings, who are living here. With them we have constant and delightful intercourse, interchanging long evenings together two or three times a-week, and driving and walking whenever we can meet. We like them very much — they are so simple, unaffected and sympathetic. Both are busily engaged in writing, he on a new volume of lyrical poems and she on a tale or novel in verse. These they would like to make some arrangement to have printed or reprinted in America, so as to secure some portion of the proceeds, or at least so as to derive some pecuniary benefit from the republication. . . . Both B. and his wife seemed greatly to have taken to you and M., and we all join in standing on the ramparts and waving our handkerchiefs for you to return.

They go to Rome this winter. If you were only to be there also! B. tells me that Clough has a position in London as superintendent of public schools, or some such office, to which he has just been appointed—you having some weeks before told me that he was settled in Cambridge and dining every Thursday with you. How is it? He had to me a sort of shagbark nature, with a smooth hard shell and a sweet kernel inside. It was hard work to get out the kernel.

"Putnam's Mag. I have heard of, but not seen. I am delighted to hear that you are writing for it, and am quite disappointed not to have received any of 'our own.' I shall of course be interested, and I long to see everything. What about the novel? You say nothing in your last letter. And 'The Nooning,' when is that? George Curtis's 'Best Society'[1] I saw in part, and thought it far the best thing I have yet seen from his pen. He did not seem to have been as particularly pleased with the dancing-girls of New York as with those of Esne. This very morning I have been reading an article in the N. Y. 'Tribune' on the sculpture in the N. Y. Exhibition, which is very clever: who writes their articles on art? I wish we had more criticism of the same kind, to prick these

[1] The Potiphar Papers.

inflated reputations of the most mediocre men. Nothing is more disgusting, nor more injurious to art, than the ignorant and wholesale adulation with which the most ordinary works of sculpture are lauded in our public prints. Can anything be more utterly without artistic merit than that abomination the equestrian Jackson by M.?—and yet see what parade of praise and solidity of cash it has brought! Was ever a farce enacted more ridiculous than its inauguration? It makes one sigh to think how low the standard of excellence must be which is more than reached by such a work. Crawford is going on with his big thing admirably. . . .

"Page is just recovering from a fever he caught at Naples, and has returned to Rome, which is to him home. He has become enamoured of Rome and puts no other place in comparison with it; and he has taken an admirable house on the Quirinal hill, where the air is excellent, for which he pays some 35 or 40 scudi a-month. Of his pictures he has yet shown me none save the portrait of Miss Cushman, which is wonderfully fine—the finest portrait, I think, I *ever* saw! The picture of Mrs Crawford is nearly done, but he will not show it. And he is painting a head of Emelyn. He will find more to do in Rome than he can possibly attend to. I

have a great impulse now to light a cigar, but as dinner is almost ready I will postpone it. Browning does not smoke; it is his greatest defect; but he tells me that Tennyson does excessively, and that after he got to Florence, on his way to Rome, he was so disquieted because he could not find a particular tobacco he liked that he turned back to England and never went to Rome. His brother Frederick is living in Florence, having married an Italian wife. B. says he is full of poetry. Lytton, by the way, is turning up a poet. I saw a couple of poems by him at B.'s, which were quite full of promise and richness. Frank Boott is at Pratolino writing quartetts."

A letter of Lowell's, of 1852, published in his correspondence, refers, with emphasis, to Page. "I have studied Art [in Italy] to some purpose, and like Page's pictures better than ever. Him I first saw in Florence. I went to the Uffizzi and passed him without knowing it. All his beautiful hair was cut short and the top of his head getting bare. After I had passed I heard him step back from his picture and recognised the tread. He was copying Titian as he was never copied before. . . . He is just the same noble great man, and as

fanatical about a certain person's poems as ever. He has become something of a Swedenborgian." Meanwhile the conditions noted in Story's letter live again for us in the rough notes that I extract from another of the little pocket-books. Our friends had gone to the Baths of Lucca from Rome, the Brownings had come thither from Casa Guidi, and Robert Lytton had returned from his brief diplomatic novitiate at Washington and been appointed to a secretaryship of Legation at Florence. I know not what happy air of the golden age, of dead summers, of easier terms, of genius and friendship in soft solution, rises from the record, slight though it be, of their various simple sociabilities. For myself, there is not an item noted that I would wish to pass. I find a richness, to begin with, in the very first entry, that of August 19th. "Took tea with the Brownings and stayed until nearly twelve, B. accompanying us home—a delicious moonlight night. Heard a letter from Miss Mitford there, which was admirably written, giving an account of Haydon the painter, whose Life is just out." "The Storys are at the top of the hill," Mrs Browning writes on August 10th to Henry Chorley; "you know Mr and Mrs Story. She and I go backward and forward to tea-drinking and gossiping at one another's

houses, and our husbands hold the reins." And later the same month to Miss Mitford: "Then our friends Mr and Mrs Story helped the mountains to please us a good deal. He is the son of Judge Story, the biographer of his father, and, for himself, sculptor and poet; and she a sympathetic, graceful woman, fresh and innocent in face and thought. We go backwards and forwards to tea and talk at one another's houses. Last night they were our visitors, and your name came in among the Household Gods to make us as agreeable as might be." Which was obviously the occasion of Story's just-recorded mention. They hear together, the next day to this, "a series of recitations by M. Alexandre, the master of Rachel, a hump-back full of cleverness and spirit." It is all, in its Arcadian setting, delightfully ancient, queer, obscure. Story expatiates with interest on the entertainment in question; but what was M. Alexandre, the master of Rachel, doing in the Tuscan mountains in August 1853? We see again indeed the little humpbacked gesticulant Parisian; we see also the Grand Duke's villa perched above the swift Lima; we make a connection as between some small court of the Renaissance and one of its salaried monsters or jesters, the little French dwarf, say, the un-

thinkable deformed tragedian. We fill out the picture, in short, in all sorts of ways, as we inevitably do, with our added "ell" whenever an inch of Italy is given us. Browning tells them one evening, at length, "the story of Basil Montagu," Mrs Procter's step-father; which was in other words the story of the *cause célèbre*, late in the eighteenth century, of Lord Sandwich and Miss Ray, Montagu's romantic progenitors, and of Hackman, the infatuated cleric who murdered, in a passion of jealousy, the nobleman's mistress. They go, the middle of September, "to Prato Fiorito, to picnic, our party consisting of the Duppers, Brownings, Lytton and ourselves. The day was glorious, and after climbing an hour we arrived at a little old church, near by which the view was magnificent. The grand limestone mountains spring sharply up, with deep patches of purple shade and little grey towns perched here and there on the lower spines. Under the trees here we spent nearly an hour, and then took our donkeys and horses again, and, after an hour and a half, passing over wild and grand scenery, with mountain-streams dripping and tumbling, and now and then over beds of red-veined jasper, we rounded a height bold and rugged as the Alps and saw before us the soft green velvety

dome of Prato Fiorito, adorable name, covered with its short golden grass. Here we lay for half an hour and talked and gazed at the tumbling waves of mountains below." There is more, but more than I can use. They spend, on another occasion—they had done so for the previous three days—"the morning down by the brook, in a shady little hollow below the house, drawing and listening to the gurgling of the brown stream. To-day we dined there on a smooth grassy table under the trees and rocks. After dinner we sat on the rock by the stream and sang, and I made me a long pipe-stem of a cane-pole and smoked and smoked. And thus the day went by till evening, dampening down the valley, sent us home. Seen from here our house seems to hang in the clouds, and I make a sketch of the place in pencil. Down in the stream, knee-deep in water, were *contadine* washing, whose splash we could hear." Or again: "The whole day in the same woods with the Brownings. We went at ten o'clock, carrying our provisions. Browning and I walked to the spot, and there, spreading shawls under the great chestnuts, we read and talked the live-long day, the Lima, at our feet, babbling on, clear and brown, over the stones, and the distant rock-ribbed peaks taking the changes

of the hours. In the afternoon we took a long walk through the grove and found wondrous *fungi*, some red as coral. . . ."

These weeks represent the first of three Italian summers spent in neighbourhood and intimacy by the principals of the good company concerned, and we shall fail of no mild light on the others that we can, however thinly, recapture. It was very much in search of mild light, so much of it at least as might abide in the old look of things, in the deep valley and the chestnut-covered heights, in the mountain-river in the little *villini* of the "Arcadian" time, clustered at their bridges, perched on their heights, and awaiting alike, apparently, in either position, some return of the tide of fortune, modest of old at the best; it was exactly, I say, under the impulse to recover any echo of an echo (as I might have held a sea-shell to my ear) that a certain time ago, early in the Tuscan summer, I went out from Lucca to where the blest Bagni—blest, I mean, to memory, but rather blighted otherwise—nestle in the deep fold of the hills. I have no right, I acknowledge, to reflect elegiacally on the fact that the Baths have now been made (had then but just been made) accessible by steam; inasmuch as, shrinking unworthily from the shadeless drive, I on this occasion took the train—only

making a point, later on, in the interest of the old echo, of returning by road. The distance from brave little old Lucca of the russet ramparts is in truth, at the worst or the best—since a couple of hours suffice for it—no great matter. If, however, it both partly bettered my case and confounded the new enterprise that I seemed, in the first flush of the latter, the sole "superior" pilgrim, this had also the effect of making the little superseded spa appear to look more wistfully still, through the old crooked spy-glass of its scarred gorge, into the modern world, the only quarter from which patronage can come to it. To this quarter it can appeal, alas!—very much as a humble person in a back-seat at the play—only by a wearisome twist of the neck, the effort, as it were, to look round a corner. "Sister Anne, sister Anne, do you see nothing come?"—*that* was perhaps the sound one most distinctly heard in the murmur of the chestnuts and the plash of the river, sister Anne being conceivable as anxiously perched on some commanding summit. One felt ashamed, under so much public expectancy, to have "come" one's self for so short a stay; ashamed, positively of an opportunity again publicly declined, an opportunity with all its sweetness so visibly in the scale. Oh, the sweetness of the summer in long

days on the higher hills, the sense of rambles, of afternoons, of siestas, of *prati fioriti* propitious to them, of views opening out into violet and silver, of villages perched in the shining spaces like old grey cities! It is a corner of the world where amiability reigns, but amiability, as we mostly see to-day, is everywhere driven to the wall, and the Bagni, with their back to their practical *impasse*, can only sit and confess to no other ground for being liked. The ground in question, poor Bagni, too rarely operates as sufficient now. Nevertheless, let it be said, the lovely land persists: what could be more amiable than little Lucca itself behind the russet ramparts once so formed to be forbidding? They are as sweet to-day—which indeed everything in the place is—as the smile of a resigned grandmother. It plays there so placidly, the smile, and withal so expressively, that it lightens the severity of interest, the slightly grim purity of character, of the fine Lucchesi churches, and suffuses even the somewhat hard historic face of Elisa Bonaparte (for her brief hour, by her brother's high hand, Grand Duchess of Tuscany and Princess of Lucca and Piombino), or that of some later Bourbon proprietress who figures on a pedestal before the Palace. Large ladies in stone and metal, in wind and weather, with magnified "charms," cheeks,

noses, bosoms, sandalled feet and dimpled hands, are rarely objects to which the fancy warms; but the tread of these heroines is now pleasantly light in the great apartments at their back, in which, as well as almost anywhere, you may still feel the wave of the feathers and fans, the rattle of the scabbards, the dice, the diplomatic laughter, of a small old-world Court. The Palace is large, as is also, I have said, the statue of its whilom mistress, but the Court affects us, in our musing walk through great bright rooms, stiff and square and classical, and up and down a stone staircase where we move, for all our modern humility, like a "party" arriving and retiring—the Court affects us as of just the right size to keep rustling away, in a mass, as we follow it; keep swimming, in advance, over the polished floors, with a ghostly click and patter, and, through whatever door we enter, whisking out of sight by the opposite. Its shrunken presence, however, here, suffers nothing worse than this pursuit from a vain curiosity. The small old grand-ducal villa at the Baths, on the other hand, opens its doors now as an almost indecently, if not pathetically, beguiling hotel. The welcome made me wince for lurking shades, which I honoured perhaps the more by running

up — though with the delicacy, after all, but rueful—so brief a bill.

The following letter brings back, a little, the time. The Storys, having departed in advance, were spending a month in Florence before their return to Rome.

*Robert Browning to W. W. Story.*

"Bagni di Lucca, *October* 1853.

"We shall follow your track as exactly and as soon as we can, but it will not be to-morrow, after all. On Monday we do go, however—so it is fixed; and what a joy to see you all again after such a weary while! If you don't believe in Monday, after so much promise-breaking, here is our method of driving disbelief out of you very effectually. Will you please (prompts Ba) tell that identical old porter he is to see that we find (English) bread, butter, milk and eggs laid in by Monday afternoon, from the accustomed purveyor of the same? This poor place has given up the ghost now, and we really want to get away. So you have good apartments? That is very well. I hear more about the fever at Rome than I care to infect this paper with. It rained yesterday and to-day, or did a few minutes ago, and I have taken to write, in default of

anything better to do—wanting to make a sketch or two (in emulation of your pencil, so happy at bridge-sides and bits of rock and water) that may bring back this last happy time when the darker days arrive, as they will, I suppose."

Story journalises in November at Leghorn—"Off at last in the old *Maria Antonietta*, a tub of a boat, with no go in her." They make for Civita Vecchia, where the difficulties raised by the police, the *dogana*, the passport people, render the place, he notes, a perfect hell for a traveller. He is three hours getting through the *dogana* and feels like a bird whose feathers have been plucked. They are late, after starting, for Rome, so late that they stop that night at Palo. "The moon came out, the sea thundered on the beach at the foot of the old posthouse and foamed high over the ruined arches that reach out into the water. The old turret-cornered fortress of the Odescalchi"—he questions the attribution—"looked grimly out above its sea-wall against the sky. All was lovely and wild and deserted, a fitting spot for some legendary tale. I walked on the shore and watched the spray and great gleaming surf and waves. It was just such a scene as that where Schedoni has the terrible interview with Elena on the

shore. Inside, groups of soldiers and *dogana* officers and police-dragoons clustered round the narrow tables in the vaulted smoky rooms and drank and talked. The post-carriages and diligences, now and then rattled up and after a hurried change were off again. The Rospigliosi horses and carriages, stabled over the whole place, also woke it up like a stone thrown into a pool. The night passed away easily, and I then framed a story for a poem on the place. The morning came up clear and glittering across the sea. All the scenery is flat and desolate, with only thin grasses and here and there a shrub, or a shorn haycock with its pole. Long tongues of tree-feathered land stretch out, into the sea, and landward the view is bounded by climbing hills, darkened over in patches with black foliage and softened into heavy purples and blues by the distance. The seashore is a soft sandy beach, shelving gradually, with, at intervals along the coast, square watchtowers, turretted, that stand boldly out on some jutting bit of land or rock. The old Odescalchi fortress, with its moat and turrets and its thick wall shutting in the courtyard where a fountain dribbles under the high steps surmounted by a stone sarcophagus, is lonely and gloomy enough. A wretched old broken-down soldier haunted

this place, as ruined and rusty and out-at-elbows as the fortress itself, which rattled a wooden shutter in its gloomy turret while I talked to him. He prowled round, in and out of the barracks in the court-yard, like an old rat round a fallen house."

The Brownings spent in Rome, at 43 Via Bocca di Leone, the winter of 1853-54, to the events of which an undated letter of Mrs Browning's refers.

*Mrs Browning to W. W. Story.*

"When Robert and I parted this morning on our different ways of attaining to the Pope's benediction, he bade me, if I returned first, to begin a note to you. . . . Now, I do hope, that as there's a tide in the affairs of men the turn has come to *you*, and the salt water and bitter seaweed will dash back from you henceforth. May you never be wounded again through the objects of your love—the only wounds which *tell* in this life. The rest are scratches. . . . A change into a better air will abolish the lingering effects of this pestilent climate. Oh, you will let me say so now — you know it *is* full of physical and moral miasma, and when I have seen the Vatican twelve times, I shall go on to say so twelve times twelve. Meanwhile, of

course, I don't 'boast of having seen Rome'—no indeed. I am properly humiliated for all my disadvantages or defects, and confess meekly in writing to England that I am the most ignorant of travellers and have seen just nothing. We are going to visit galleries, however, villas, ruins, and crowd as much sight-seeing into as little space. We heard the wrong Miserere, I believe, on Friday, but it was very fine, wrong or right, and very overcoming in its ejaculating pathos. I sat that day in the Sistine Chapel for the first time. Then we have made various Campagna excursions with Mrs Sartoris and Mrs Kemble, dined in bosky valleys, and pinewood forests, and done the proper honour to your glorious opal mountains in the distance. Castel Fusano pleases me the best. . . . I shall not forget our descent into Genoa from the mountains in the supernatural moonlight, which touched my brain with all sorts of fantastic suppositions. I remember Robert wondering whether I was mad or not. That was in coming from Turin more than a year ago."

Sorrow, for our friends, had at this time been more sharply mingled with cheer than it was ever again to be; their return to Rome had been followed by an occasion of anxiety on behalf of

their two elder children which found its climax in the death, at six years of age, of the boy, at that period the most precious of their possessions and ever afterwards to be remembered as such. No person or thing, in their life, was again to have an equal value. Their little girl, taken ill at the same time, had been removed to the care of the Brownings: to all of which Mrs Browning, writing on December 21st to Mrs Jameson, refers. "Ah, dearest friend! you have heard how our fresh step into Rome was a fall, not into a catacomb but a fresh grave, and how everything here has been slurred and blurred to us, and distorted from the grand antique associations. I protest to you I doubt whether I shall get over it, and whether I ever shall feel that this is Rome. The first day at the bed's head of that convulsed and dying child; and the next two, three, four weeks in great anxiety about his little sister, who was all but given up by the physicians. . . . It was not only sympathy. I was selfishly and intensely frightened for my own treasures." The death of the little boy was followed, happily, by the recovery of his sister; in so slow and difficult a fashion, however, that anxiety continued, an anxiety reflected to-day in a series of singularly zealous and lucid letters of Browning's—he apparently having mediated

between the parents and the great Roman doctor of that time, Pantaleoni, at a moment when some of the results of the physician's judgment and treatment had caused them to doubt. They had quitted Rome, with the convalescent child, for other air, and he writes to them at La Posta, Velletri. "I suppose your next will be from Albano. I wish it had been Frascati, I think; so beautiful did it seem last Saturday, when I went there with Lockhart, whose temper got a pain in it before the day was over. I'll tell you at Albano, where I shall go on a much lighter summons than the last. There are plenty of small news we will talk and laugh over, Baths of Lucca fashion, when we meet, if all proceeds as I trust. Chorley has brought out *another* play, with but dubious success I fear. Grace Greenwood has printed us flamingly in her book, it seems." Concerning the early part of that winter in Rome and the remainder of it, after the dark cloud had discharged itself and the Storys were restored to 93 Piazza di Spagna, where they were then living, a pleasant legend of kind, distinguished visitors still survives, one of them incomparably benevolent to a languid little girl who needed amusement and who was to be for ever grateful. Hans Andersen, whose private interest in children and whose ability to

charm them were not less marked than his public, knew well his way to the house, as later to Palazzo Barberini (to the neighbourhood of which the "Improvisatore" was able even to add a charm); where the small people with whom he played enjoyed, under his spell, the luxury of believing that he kept and treasured—in every case and as a rule—the old tin soldiers and broken toys received by him, in acknowledgment of favours, from impulsive infant hands. Beautiful the queer image of the great benefactor moving about Europe with his accumulations of these relics. Wonderful too our echo of a certain occasion—that of a children's party, later on—when, after he had read out to his young friends "The Ugly Duckling," Browning struck up with the "Pied Piper"; which led to the formation of a grand march through the spacious Barberini apartment, with Story doing his best on a flute in default of bagpipes. But the tenderest recollection is of Thackeray reading "The Rose and the Ring," as yet unpublished (a book of plates, so to speak, "before the letter"), to the little convalescent girl who was always so happily to remember that, chapter by chapter, the immortal work had, in the old Roman days, between daylight and dusk, as the great author sat on the edge of her bed, been tried on her. The first

edition of the book has been known to contain a memorial of this charming relation in the form of the image of an obsequious flunkey presenting a little rose and a little ring on a salver, with, above, in facsimile of the author's beautiful hand, his "most respectful compliments to Miss Edith Story": to all of which—the "foreign city where there were many English children," the futility of attempted purchase of Twelfth Night characters, the substitute thence excogitated with Miss Bunch, and the other associations, some of them so toothsome, with the Piazza di Spagna—the preface prettily alludes. The happy relation was moreover, in ceremonious form, to be renewed; both parties to it were during a part of the next winter in Boston, and their later friendship is confirmed in a little old American copy of "Ballads," presented with "the author's profound respect."

Story quitted Rome, with his wife and children, early that summer; to which we have, again, testimony.

*Robert Browning to W. W. Story.*

"FLORENCE, *June 11th*, 1854.

. . . "We left Page (in Rome) fighting off his fever; a little more effectually perhaps, but far from well. I shall surprise you by telling

you—now that I *may* tell—that he painted a magnificent portrait of me, the finest even of his works, just the head, which he wished to concentrate his art upon, in a manner which would have been impossible had the canvas been larger. The result is marvellous. I hate keeping secrets, but this was Page's, not mine; he even wished my wife to be kept in ignorance of it, which of course was impossible. And the end is that he has presented the picture to her. Both of us would have fain escaped being the subjects of such a princely piece of generosity; but there was no withstanding his admirable delicacy and noble-mindedness, which made the sacrifice of such time and labour even easy. I wished him to keep the picture for a year at least, but he sent it to me on the morning of our departure. So it is here, the wonder of everybody; no such work has been achieved in our time—to my knowledge at least. I am not qualified to speak of the likeness, understand, only of the life and effect, which, I wish, with all my heart, had been given to my wife's head or any I like better to look at than my own. Lytton goes to England in a few days; we have had some pleasant evenings together. I am trying to make up for wasted time in Rome and setting my poetical house in order. Mrs Kemble

left Rome on the same day with ourselves; not in our company, unfortunately, but circumstances were too strong for our wishes. She left Florence as soon as we arrived. Mrs Sartoris will be here, or at Lucca, presently. . . ."

Our friends, betaking themselves to France, spent some weeks at Dieppe; after which they settled for the ensuing winter in Paris. There, as was their nature, they found, they attracted, promptly enough, their circle; of which, with M. de Tocqueville, were Mme. Mohl, the universal, the irrepressible, her erudite husband and more others than can here be recalled. Robert Lytton, by that time transferred to the British Embassy and engaged in writing "Lucille," was again a valued visitor. It is to this period, I take it, that an undated letter from him belongs.

*R. B. Lytton to W. W. Story.*

[Paris, 1855.]

"My dear Story,—'A friend in need is a friend indeed.' I came home only very late last night, and did not get up till very late this morning, so that I have only just read your most kind letter, although I believe it has been here all night. I cannot lose a moment in telling you how truly touched I am by the cordial

warmth and friendliness of what you say, nor how heartily I reciprocate it. The singular delicacy as well as frankness of your letter, and the ready friendliness with which you have met mine, makes me, I assure you, feel almost grateful to the unpleasant circumstances which have procured me this noble evidence of what my friend is. I shall endeavour to get away from the Chancellerie and follow this letter to your studio. But if I should find myself unable to do this I will be there to-morrow *early*. Meanwhile shall you be at home to-night, and if not when will you? Every night I am disengaged except Friday, and I long to hear what more of your poems you will read me. But I should feel of course very sorry if I thought you likely to make any interference with other arrangements on that account. So I shall keep myself clear for this evening until I have seen you.

"*P.S.*—My uncle is very anxious to be allowed to see your Beethoven. Is it too late for him to hope to do so? I think you said it was casting."

To which I add another, related by its date to the same season. J. R. Lowell, who had left home the previous summer, had just quitted Germany; having prepared there, in our good old way, for the Professorship to which he had lately

been appointed at Harvard, very much as Story had been qualifying in Italy for the sculptorship that he had embraced only to feel considerably concerned to give it up.

*J. R. Lowell to W. W. Story.*

"PARIS, *July* 1855.

"MY DEAR WILLIAM,—I ought to have written to you yesterday, and that is the only good reason I can give for not having done it. But the truth is that I went to Versailles to see the monster squirts which play there every other Sunday, and as I got up rather late, I had not time to write and see the *Granz-O* also. I trust you give me credit for enough human nature not to expect me on the day I said I should come. There are so many last things to do that though not 'loath to depart' I am 'still taking leave.'

"I saw the Jardin Mabille and the Château des Fleurs when I was here before, and have been again—but found them rather stupid. The lights and all that are pretty, but the dancers seem to me like a French vaudeville made out of Dante's 'Inferno.' The flavour of hell is there, but every drop of poetry that would spoil the punch is left out. I have seen all I wish of Paris. . . . If I wanted to be 'wicked' I wouldn't be so here as some of our compatriots, I believe, are,

but at home where the thing would have a great deal more *tang* to it. Smoky London suits me better, and we will go and dine at the Cock—yes, and see the Tabard also, and old Gower's tomb close by at St Mary Overie's. We will have rational amusement, which means a beef-steak and a pot of porter.

"Don't expect *us* (for Cranch comes too) till Wednesday. If we should arrive Tuesday it will be something to thank God for, but I know my own habits too well to think it possible. I shall rescue the watch and shall ransom it if necessary. In these sad days one can't get together his retainers (I don't speak of lawyers) and go drub a tradesman into reason, nor am I facile enough (in French) to quarrel to any advantage. Cranch has just come in, and we debate the several routes. We want to see the cathedral at Amiens. But we are coming anyhow."

The Storys, in London at receipt of this, were once more on their way back to America—in obedience to considerations that, added to anxiety for his mother's health,[1] strike us (in view of the months just sacrificed to Paris, and though the

[1] He was greeted, on the ship's touching at Halifax, with the news of his mother's death.

letters in which we might trace their growth are absent) as now having begun to creep, a little after the manner of the disconcerting snake, into the general paradise of Italy. It is indeed true that the most insidious of these serpents had become, for Story, simply the question of his own future as an artist—a question which, after such continuity of experiment as appeared adequate, he had found himself impelled to answer with a negative. He had, to his view, either not the root of the matter in him, or else it required, for the promise of full growth, more watering than even the loved Italy could give. He had lost heart, in a word, under influences of which we have not the record, but which are sufficiently imaginable; though we shall see to what extent, and with what appetite, after he had carried his remedy into effect, he was to regain it. His remedy had been to return again to Boston; which, for a doubting sculptor, was naturally not the most direct one. He had had to come round to the indirect, the recovery of confidence in another profession; but this indirectness acted, precisely, as the situation developed, in the interest of the fonder dream. Story's real remedy, it may frankly be said, would have been, at any moment, to do what he was never to do, what he was to have failed, from the first, of favouring

time and place for: to go, namely, to school, in the simplest meaning of the term. He had served no apprenticeship to his craft and mystery, had not only not been through the mill, but had not even undergone preparation for that discipline. It is difficult, in truth, to see what mill, at that season, and in all the conditions, would have struck him as turning for him, what apprenticeship, to the deeper initiation, he could conveniently have served. He had started too late for this, and we may take it to heart if we like, as one of the lessons of our history, that in having been, by his essential conditions, as one may say, fairly doomed to miss the rigour of a technical education, he was the victim, all innocent at first, and unconscious, of an order of things from which standards were absent. His own nearest approach to them had been to go to Italy so that he might feed himself with impressions, and so that, in the light of these impressions, he might then produce; but what he appears to have ended by perceiving was that, though it is in the nature of such delightful matters to hover about us, on the up-hill path of art, like cooling airs, this rude ascent gains from them, in strictness, little smoothing or straightening. That process is for quite another engineer, the earliest riser of the escort, whose offices, in

their beneficent morning, Story may very well have had a season of feeling, not without despair, that he had lost. Still, when so much is said, none of his impressions were to be wasted; what befell in the event was that his susceptibility, curiosity, agility, facility, felicity, to say nothing of his plain power of hard work, were signally to help him. If Boston was to clear up his tangle the clearance that took place was, after all, in the sense of the greater inclination.

He was not to know till he had tried a second winter there how little his Roman doubts mattered. He might live as an anxious, even as a misguided, artist, but he could not, apparently, live as anything more orthodox. The anxiety, at least, might, so to speak, still be beguiled, but the habit of conformity was not to be acquired, was not, at any rate, to be found bearable. The unsuccessful effort to acquire it, and the resulting consciousness of not having found what he wanted, and of not wanting what he had found, is reflected, inevitably enough, in the pessimism of his letter. He missed too much what he had learned to love, and he missed in particular his correspondent, then out of reach, with whom at least he could have talked. Very special and very interesting to catch in the fact—even if not of the order of things "eternal"—is

the state of being of the American who has bitten deep into the apple, as we may figure it, of "Europe," and then has been obliged to take his lips from the fruit. The intensity of the case depends of course on the inward energy of the bite and the kind of susceptibility involved in the act of tasting. There are small kinds and there are great kinds, and when these latter have been engaged the subsequent sense of privation is of course proportionate. The apple of "America" is a totally different apple, which, however firm and round and ruddy, is not to be (and above all half a century ago was not to have been) negotiated, as the newspapers say, by the same set of teeth. The inward drama of this perception on the part of the repatriated pilgrim has enacted itself in thousands of breasts and thousands of lives, and doubtless goes on doing so without coming to light—that is to any such light as permits us, as we say of dramas that are typical, to assist at it. It has never been noted, reported, commemorated, in a manner worthy of its intrinsic interest. That interest of course differs with the quantity of feeling, of passion and reflection involved; and these differ, not less, with the quantity of experience assimilated, the number of possibilities missed, the number of actualities to be faced and the special savour of these

actualities. There is often, at all events, a conflict of forces as sharp as any of those in which the muse of history, the muse of poetry, is usually assumed to be interested. But the conflict, we have noted, has mostly remained, for the critic's eye, obscure and ambiguous. It has in fact never been presented at all at that tribunal; it has failed of its sacred poet, unaccountably unconscious of its merits as a "subject." That makes us the more keen in presence of examples accidentally revealed.

*W. W. Story to J. R. Lowell.*

"Boston, *December 30th*, 1855.

"You and I want an audience which is intelligent and sympathetic, which can understand and stamp what is good and what is bad; we do not write for idiots or for bores; we gather strength from sympathy; we must have our sounding-board to give effect to the tune we play. Allston starved spiritually in Cambridgeport; he fed upon himself. There was nothing congenial without, and he turned all his powers inward and drained his memory dry. His works grew thinner and vaguer every day, and in his old age he ruined his great picture. I know no more melancholy sight than he was, so rich and beautiful a nature, in whose veins the south

ran warm, which was born to have grown to such height and to have spread abroad such fragrancy, stunted on the scant soil and withered by the cold winds of that fearful Cambridgeport. I look at his studio whenever I pass with a heart-pang. It's a terrible ghost—all is in fact ghostlike here. There's no such thing as flesh and blood; we hob-a-nob with spirits freely. We love nothing, we criticise everything. Even the very atmosphere is critical. Every twig is intensely defined against the sky. The sky itself is hard and distant. Earth takes never the hue of its heaven. The heart grows into stone. The devil-side of enthusiasm (irritability) possesses us. There is no hearty love of anything, for we are afraid of making a mistake. We love unhappiness. . . . You think we are honest, but I find Boston changed greatly in this respect. You say at least in the home-relations we are right, and tell a horrible exceptional story. Well: it is only some three weeks ago that two husbands, under false pretences, inveigled two handsome youths . . . to their houses, at separate times. The husbands attacked each; drove —— down cellar and beat him terribly, ending by kicking him over the wall in the back yard. The poor youth is since dead of the wounds he received. The cause of this brutal cowardice is that the

two wives, &c., &c. . . . I disbelieve in the superior honesty of the Americans. They have little blood and few sensual temptations, but they do not resist what temptations they have. What do you say of S—, Q— and B—? They are exceptional? Why then are they not caught and punished as Strahan and Paul are in England? We are not shocked at these things; they are a day's wonder and that's all. Society is scabbed over with pretences, but it's not healthy for all that. Carter and I have terrible growls over America in the little back room at Little and Brown's. He says we are the greatest and best of people. I do not agree. But what a growl I have given *you*. I didn't mean to when I began; . . . but if ever there was a Little Pedlington!

"One great charm that America had to me was that it held you within its limits, and I feel the want very greatly. How I daily wish you were here! . . . It is my brain that gets so over-excited. What do you think I have been about these three months? Why, writing law—in Little and Brown's back room. I have actually written about 400 pages in that time to add to a new edition of my 'Contracts,' and I feel like a wet rag after it. Now it is nearly over, and I am thinking of making a basso

rilievo of the Pied Piper with the children flocking after him. But what encouragement to do it? Nobody will buy it, nobody cares for it. There would be real interest if I had imported a cargo of saltpetre.

"Yesterday we had a great snowstorm, and the snow is heaving like great surf-waves over the walls in the country and the roofs of the houses. All along the eaves are *friezes* of icicles, jagged as a wolf's teeth, and now and then comes down a thundering avalanche. For the last few days we have had a crystal world, trees of pure glass, and electric wires of spun glass stretching for miles. The country looks like an enchanted land; the sombre green pines crusted with diamonds and bending 'neath their weight, the slender birches bowing to the ground in arches of gleaming ice, all the weeds like crystalline fingers. . . . The spectacle is magnificent.

"Heaps of new books are out, but nothing American of any importance but Prescott's 'Phillip II.,' which everybody is reading. Stories and novels of wretched quality swarm. . . . Longfellow's 'Hiawatha' has raised a row, a free fight into which all the editors have rushed, and in the meantime some eight or nine thousand copies have sold. It is in many respects excellent, graceful and simple, but diffuse and

lacking in power. Thackeray has been lecturing here to crowded houses, but people did not want to be pleased, and he was severely criticised. He was not heavy and instructive enough, for Boston, and only a few dared thoroughly to like the light and genial sketches of manners and society he gave us in his inimitable way. Oddly enough, *our* people objected to him that he pitched into the Georges and called them names. . . . P. M. objected to them on the score that he could find all the facts and anecdotes in books he had in his library. I told him I was astonished to hear him say so, for I thought Thack. had invented them all. But this was too deep for P. Thack. has been far from well here, and I'm afraid that he's in a bad way. George Curtis begins on the 15th his course of lectures on the Novelists before the Lowell Institute.

"I was delighted to read what you wrote of Ristori. It was pleasant to see in Paris what a weight and value her character gave to her acting. Rachel seemed a sham after her. The Italians have the real *clou* of passion; the heart forces them into pathos and moves enthusiasm and sympathy in others. They are the most naturally powerful of all actors; the heat of their natures melts the covering of artificial

rules. But I am no judge of Italy and Italians; the very names fire me. My taste is spoilt for everything else—foolishly enough. Shall I ever again be as happy as I was then? Ah heaven, we never can repeat. Ardently as I desire to return, I *fear*. Things are so changed, *I* am so changed. Sometimes I dream I am there and life is glad as it once was. I take great drafts of beauty and awake to find myself in Rowe Street and to drudge the day out.

"Do you hibernate with a great white ghost of a stove? Do you talk the horse-language to unkempt professors? Have you got through the swamp of a dictionary yet? Do you put and answer daily those admirable Ollendorffian questions?—'I have been to Paris, but I have not broken my sister's wooden table.' You do not seem to over-like Deutschland. Yet there is good there—a homely picturesqueness of life and customs which is good material for art. Our imitations here are very brummagem. Our Christmas tree here is a ghastly sham. I wish you could send me the whole series of the 'Jugend-Kalender.' . . . The drawings are so free and clever and full of Germanity. M. has been staying with us all Christmas week and we had a great time together; such romping at night, with the wildest of shrieking, was never

known. We carried her out to Mrs Howe's (Julia's) where was a Christmas tree and a dance and tableaux from 'The Rose and the Ring' by us great people. . . . Rachel made a great sensation here; everybody took a book and read to follow her; nobody understood what she said; but everybody thought her wonderful. . . . Nobody cared for her character. She was wretchedly supported by a set of dirty Jews, and they too were taken into the general admiration. She was jewier than ever and tried to skin a flint in Boston, which created a little reaction. But you know we go by fashion, and it was the fashion to consider her unequalled. It was as much as one's life was worth even to make a question. I have not yet bought any house or land, but if I do not I shall never return to America. Let us . . . all go to Newport and live there—or go somewhere and live together."

His chagrin, it need scarcely, after all, be added, was eminently "subjective"; he was sick and sore with his defeat, as he supposed it, for the time, to have been; some of his generalisations were assuredly whimsical and some of his links missing. What it all came to saying, however, was that, with an alienated

mind, he found himself again steeped in a society both fundamentally and superficially *bourgeois*, the very type and model of such a society, presenting it in the most favourable, in the most admirable light; so that its very virtues irritated him, so that its ability to be strenuous without passion, its cultivation of its serenity, its presentation of a surface on which it would appear to him that the only ruffle was an occasionally acuter spasm of the moral sense, must have acted as a tacit reproach. Hovering shades again, for the rest, peep out between his lines; it would be for instance, with more of a margin, scarce possible not to pause for a parley at the sight, behind the bars, of the handsome, the attaching younger face of George William Curtis. We have met G. W. Curtis's name, with an allusion slightly occult, in another letter; the allusion having been there, apparently, to his recent return from a journey to the East, followed by the publication of the "Nile Notes of a Howadji" with which his so variously responsive youth was regaling New York. The East was more distant then and Nile notes were less frequent; howadjis were more portentous, New York was more susceptible, and youth, above all, when not inevitably commercial, familiarly financial, when by exception addicted

both to ideas and to the polka, was more easily brilliant. The reason is the better accordingly to rejoice in a personal impression (however immature at the time, or even however abnormally precocious the perceptive plate,) of the friendly little phase in which poetry and pleasantry could operate together, like a master-juggler, with few preparations. At an age so tender that I had then read neither "Eothen" nor, *a fortiori*, "The Newcomes," as yet unpublished, the howadji of the Notes seemed to exhale sandalwood and cinnamon with the last potency; just as "The Potiphar Papers," succeeding them from the same hand, seemed to pour upon New York society satire of the finest distillation. The book was an ingenuous tribute to the genius in whose projected shadow—for it was the time of Thackeray's own first advent—we were all living, and I mention it to-day but for the quaint ghostliness of the note. We liked to think that, on our reduced but still respectable scale, we were ripe, socially ripe, both for satire and for the fine degustation of it. We liked to think that we too had our wicked worldly side, our types and our hierarchy, our great people and our less great, our raddled dowagers behind their fans, our Major Pendennises at their club windows, our snobs and parvenus, in fine, our

themes for the easy moralist, our amiable vices. Our vices in "The Potiphar Papers" will have been, I surmise, of a really childlike amiability. All of which indeed was soon, even then, to become very ancient history, so that if I speak of the ghostly quaintness of the note it must not be without immediately adding that George Curtis's own became, promptly enough, a much fuller and deeper thing, that of the public voice eloquent, persuasive, for more than thirty years, in political and literary journalism and in that art of the lecture-hall which, for given conditions, the American people, inventors surely of the modern *conférence*, had long been working out, and were to continue to work out, with a special ingenuity.

My earlier reminiscence finds itself in fact easily overlaid by another; which, though of a date still remote enough, lives in my memory both as a charmed and as an ominous impression. This—always in hoary eld and a matter of the comparatively primitive, the provincial lecture-hall—was also anciently to recur, in the light of events, to a young mind just waking up to a sense of contemporary history. The young mind was to recall the particular occasion as having caused it, at the very hour, to feel the breath of public trouble then to come. This

marked—and with an uneffaced picture—the first dim apprehension; for when the Civil War began to loom as a reality I said to myself, still with the complacency of youth, that such was the argument I had in fact attributed, a couple of years before, to the beautiful beguiling orator in the none too brilliant auditorium of the Newport "off-season," even he who, pleading the cause of "The American Scholar," under a dimmish illumination and with his back to a solemn burgess or two, had shown us the straight way to apply the great lessons of antiquity. The great way was to stand up, at every point, to the invading Persians, the arrogant Slave Power—"these are our Marathon and our Thermopylæ, these are our heroic fields." The heroic fields were indeed little enough to be wanting, any more than the connection of the beautiful beguiling orator with them was to fail of closeness. In addition to which I make haste to remind myself that sympathies and loyalties of a certain order, reviving in retrospect, are not properly a subject for a parenthesis; all the more that there are meanwhile other faces—though considerably more dim—behind the bars. It looks at us, to my sense, I confess, as a wan face, the one evoked by Story's allusion to Washington Allston at

Cambridgeport. Irrepressible memory plays up again at this touch; not of the beautiful colourist and composer himself, withering in a cruel air, but of the indistinct yet irresistible inference that his great strange canvas, so interrupted but so impressive, at the old Boston Athenæum, used, at a particular restless season, to force one to draw. The unfinished, the merely adumbrated parts of this huge "Daniel before Belshazzar" would certainly have boded sufficient ill had it not been for the beauty of these other portions which shone out like passages of melody, of musical inspiration, in some troubled symphony or sonata; and the lesson of the whole picture, even for a critic in the groping stage, seemed to be that it was the mask of some impenetrable inward strain. On this theme the fancy —especially if the fancy asked nothing better— could embroider at will. It possessed few *data;* it was conscious, in presence of the work and of the temperament revealed in it, but of one *other* fact—the grim synthetic fact, as Story hints at it, of Cambridgeport. The picture itself was, in essence, the fact of Italy, of the earlier old Italy than Story's own, just as the fact of Cambridgeport was the fact of a Cambridgeport also earlier — which in this case meant newer. The theme for embroidery was

thus in the mere collocation—and what indeed could the vision of the inward experience have wanted more? It was animated, the vision, as one walked back through Cambridgeport, with the remorseless analysis of the quiet painter's nostalgia. One lived it over—it had to have been, in the nature of the case, so much finer than one's own. To have seen what, in his divine *Wanderjahre*, he had seen, and to see, that period ended, what he did see — verily the intensity of the latter experience on one's own part acted, creatively, in one's mind, in respect to the former. And one didn't at the time know that, in the mystic, melancholy business, one was but treading in Story's steps. We trace these steps, more lightly, in another letter of the same winter.

*W. W. Story to J. R. Lowell.*

"Boston, *February 18th*, 1856.

"My dear James,—I must add my mite to the contribution-box going to a friend cast away in Germay, if it be only to congratulate him on being there. I dare say you think yourself worse off in Dresden than you could possibly be in Boston, for it is the peculiarity of man to hate what he has and cry for what he has not. But in this one instance you are

wrong—the arctic zone has slipped down like a garter and got on to the temperate. Kane's account of his winter among the floes is not an exaggeration of our Boston experience. The city has spent no less than 20,000 dols. in ploughing up and carting away the streets. They are masses of hideous ice, with 'ruffian billows' and pits — 'thankee-marms' as we used to call them in the good old days—that disturb the strongest stomach that goes over them, as much as a steamer in a head wind. . . . George Curtis's course of lectures on the Novelists was very successful. His manner was charming, and his matter most genial and pleasant. Ticknor sat grimly beside me one evening when the lecture was on Dickens and remarked after it was over that he should probably have been more interested in it if he had ever read one of Dickens's books and knew the *pearsons* alluded to; but that he had made three unsuccessful efforts at the 'Pickwick Papers' and had failed to find anything in them. All the girls fell in love with George and said he was 'perfectly splendid.' I thought of you often, and all your friends spoke of *your* lectures constantly as being so very admirable. And, by the way, we drank your health in good warm-hearted Hungarian wine the other

day at Longfellow's and wished you were with us, or rather we were with you. I am in hopes the Longfellows will go out with us in the summer.

"I have got almost through with my book on 'Contracts,' which has now swelled to two volumes of 750 pages each, and am preparing a volume of poems for the press; which, if I decide to publish, I shall ask to dedicate to you if you are willing to take so poor a gift. I do not think they are bad; at all events they are so very far ahead of the old volume that I think it may be as well to print. . . . Next week I prologuize the Beethoven statue, which is to be inaugurated with considerable circumstance of music, &c. I hate to do this, but for Crawford's and Perkins's sake I yielded —although I had sworn after the last [time] that I would never again publicly recite my verses. Consider all that Emelyn says. Resign your professorship and stay with those who love you."

Mr Longfellow's name, we need little reflection to feel, unfortunately does not—to a loss of honour for us—fall into even the most elastic of our categories. He has too much public substance and is of too direct a presence to

figure as one of our shades. Admirably, beneficently present, in the old days—with an urbanity all his own—he is yet not, I fear, even reducible to a case of fellowship in nostalgia with our friend: which indeed, at the same time, would open for us a fresh scent and start a fresh hare, had we conceivably time to follow them up. For, complete and established, attuned and settled, Mr Longfellow, precisely, was perhaps interesting for nothing so much as for the secret of his harmony (harmony of situation and sense I of course mean) and for the way in which his "European" culture and his native kept house together. Did he owe the large, quiet, pleasant, easy solution at which he had arrived (and which seems to-day to meet my eyes through the perspective, perhaps a little through the golden haze, of time,) to his having worked up his American consciousness to that mystic point—one of those of which poets alone have the secret—at which it could feel nothing but continuity and congruity with his European? I put the question—for all it is worth—without quite seeing how it is to be answered, and in fact merely as a manner of recording an individual impression of something in his liberal existence that was like a fine (in those days, at Cambridge Massachusetts a delightful) ambiguity.

If it seemed a piece of the old world smoothly fitted into the new, so it might quite as well have been a piece of the new fitted, just as intimately, into the old. What is mainly incidental, however, to the letter last quoted is the reply.

*J. R. Lowell to W W. Story*

"DRESDEN, *Jan.* 28, 1856.

. . . "As to what you say about Boston, I will drink up Essel and eat a crocodile with you on that subject any day—you can't scold worse about it than I would. I know that the finest political institutions in the world don't make a country pleasant to live in, and that one may find unlimited freedom frightfully oppressive. I would gladly subscribe toward *offering* (a judicious phrase) a handsome reward to anybody who will find a cure for the (*small-*) potato-disease with which Boston is fearfully infected; but——! For example, here you are asked to deliver an address or something at the inauguration of Crawford's Beethoven—which you can do very handsomely, as you have made a better one yourself: well, give 'em a rousing orthodox discourse, give a distant panoramic view of the lake of fire and brimstone that is prepared for all nations who don't love art, or who don't love it

rightly. You have got plenty of fight in you—let it out so. You can do the people good: there are plenty of them who would be glad to think right if they only knew how. But to think of liking any country when your experience is such as you describe is preposterous. If Little and Brown had a shop in Elysium and I were shut up in a little back room of it to write a law-book, I would do something or other that would get me transported to hell—where, by the way, one would be much more likely to meet the booksellers.

"But the truth is when I wrote to you I was suffering under a horrible homesickness and—shall I confess it?—longing for Italy. I am going there! in a month. I got absolutely sick under it, and I've only begun to mend by agreeing with myself to let the real part of me go, if the professional part works hard enough in the meanwhile. When I wrote to you, I was trying to reason myself out of it. I couldn't sleep, I couldn't eat, I couldn't endure to be spoken to; in short I was very badly off, and my nerves are still not what I like.

"I agree with you as to the wants one feels at home. When I look back and think how much in me might have earlier and kindlier developed if I had been reared here, I feel bitter. But on

the other hand, I prize my country-breeding, the recollections of my first eight years, my Hosey Biglow experiences, as something real, and I mean to make a poem out of them some day that shall be really American. But we were born at an ill time; we must fight; we can't merely live, and unluckily we can't be born over again. But I like America better than Germany in many respects. They have too *many* ideas here; so many tools that they only handle them without doing anything. The beauty of Greece was that they had very few ideas, and those simple and great. The Germans try to recreate Greece by studying themselves into it and acquiring a bee-hive of notions small and confused. The wise Goethe has talked as much twaddle as any man I know. When people jabber so much about Art as they do here and have all their terms so cut and dried they are only playing cards on Art's coffin—just as Aristotle's Poetics was the funeral oration of Greek poetry. But I must quit that. 'Take your hat and come out of that!' That reminds me how many good times we have had together. It was one of our old catchwords. But I must not think of old times either,—it makes me sick. I will think of what is to come, and namely of your Pied Piper. . . . It is an admirable subject, and you must make something

out of it fit to go up beside Luca della Robbia's Singing Children. There is a very good version of the story, by the way, in Howell's Letters, which may give you some hints if you have it not already. Why doesn't Charley Perkins order a Mozart for the other niche? or it ought to be an Italian, Palestrina, perhaps. Do you remember our ride and the nightingales? Well, we shall meet some day or other I hope; if not here on some Italian planet."

The ride with the nightingales had of course been to the Palestrina of the Roman hills during Lowell's visit to Italy four years previous, the spring of 1852, spent by him, with his first wife, in Rome, as has been mentioned, and marked by the death there of his little boy. The occasion had already, in 1854, been commemorated, with a charming play of humour and fancy, in one of the episodes of "Fireside Travels." If Story, meanwhile, during the winter of 1856, was doing his best to turn his back upon the plastic arts, he had at least, in Boston, to venture a look over his shoulder at his friend Crawford's fine bronze Beethoven, then about to take the place it was for long years so impressively to occupy in that interesting, that infinitely historic old Hall of Music which, after signal service as one of the

worthiest temples of the art, has been lately superseded. I recall vividly, from various scenes and occasions, — from which the gravity and dignity of the place never seemed absent, and to which they even, at hours, seemed quite nobly to contribute,—the effect of the great composer's image, erect but absorbed, meditative, mighty, and as if dimly gilded, holding the note, guarding the idea, so to speak, of which the whole place was the expression. Short of having been able to indulge the dream of himself creating the figure, nothing could have made Story happier, to a certainty, than to celebrate in verse the creation of a colleague. He was happy, all his life, in his command of these alternatives, and I think that day at the Music Hall gives something of the measure of it. Sculpture, poetry, music, friendship—those were his fondest familiars, and it was a sacrifice to them all in one.

# MIDDLE ROMAN YEARS

## VI.

### THE PALAZZO BARBERINI.

It was early in the summer of 1856—on July 2nd, to be exact, and in the old *America* of the Cunard line—that Story left Boston, on his way back to Rome, "for good." I glean from a confused little *carnet* that the local thermometer, a few days before, had marked 98 degrees in the shade; by which *carnets* might well have been confused. I further glean that his friends R. H. Dana (no longer "before the mast") and T. G. Appleton, the much revolving —the latter doubtless as an effect of that "whip in the sky" which his wit, locally famous, had been the first to denounce—were of the ship's company. By the end of the month Lowell, quitting Dresden, had joined him in London, and, though the little *carnet* presently fails, it first holds out a finger or two. "August 1st, dine with Thackeray and the 'Punch' men"—one could at need find worlds in that; just as, more

specifically, I could find worlds in the entry—"Out to Mount Felix and spent the day there"—of July 30th. He spent that summer at Walton-on-Thames, close to the beautiful and bountiful Mount Felix; in which happy neighbourhood, in September, his youngest son was born. These English lingerings, with more beguilements of friendship than I can name to-day, were not, however, to his main purpose; in pursuance of which latter he settled himself in Rome later in the autumn. But before following him there I find a place, the least inconsequent, for a letter he had received a few months before.

*J. R. Lowell to W. W. Story.*

"CATANIA, SICILY, *May 7th*, 1856.

"MY DEAR WILLIAM,—Your and Emelyn's letters followed me to Florence, and I have been running about so ever since that I have not had a quiet day for answering them. I wrote you that I had resolved to go to Italy. Well, I came and found myself so much the better for it that I am already the first week of my third month. Having got to Rome, my sister would have me go on with them to Naples, and being in Naples she advised me very strongly to make the tour of Sicily, which I have just been doing with Black, Norton and Field. We have come hither

from Palermo on mules, I believe about two hundred and odd miles; tremendous work, but worth doing at any cost and discomfort. Enough discomfort there is—such inns as it never entered into the heart of man to conceive; so nasty, so fleay, and all that. But one lives and likes it. I am staying at home to-day in the hope of accomplishing Etna to-night; but I am afraid I shall funk, as I do not find myself very well, and unless I feel better this afternoon shall not try it. We are getting old, my dear boy. Black and Field will go at any rate, and Norton and I as far as Nicolosi. Thence we go to Messina and so back to Naples. In Italy proper I have done one or two places I skipped before—Ravenna, Parma, Mantova, Orvieto and the like. I cannot tell you how well it has been with me till now—when I was getting a little downhearted again. Now I have given you a notion of my track, and you know Italy too well not to be able to fill it out. The great days, of course, never come back; but Italy is still Italy. I dreamed night before last of being at Nantasket with M. 16 years ago, and it has made me sad.

"When I read about your book, my dear friend, and your offer to dedicate it to me, it brought the tears into my eyes—it brought back so much. How could I be anything but pleased?

I am sure the volume will do you honour, as the dedication will me. We are long friends, and we shall be more to each other as we grow older. I am glad to have our names united in any way.

"I hear in a roundabout way of your Beethoven-statue inauguration. It must have been at a good time, but your own letter is the last I have received from home, and I wait to hear directly from you. . . . But what things one sees in sculptors' studios, side by side with all that fulness of old art! The want of fancy in decorative parts quite perplexes me. I begin to believe that even Greek breath in frosty air took gracefuller forms than ours."

The letter winds up with a reference to a subscription then on foot among the friends of William Page for the purchase of a wonderful Venus lately painted by him, and of which it was bravely desired that the Boston Athenæum might become possessor. Whether or no—as well might have been—that institution was shy of the gift, the idea was to be crowned with no consequence perceptible to later generations. What with the immateriality of the welcome to the "consummate" nude on the one side and the evanescence of the offering itself on the other, the plot of the little drama (the actual develop-

ment of which might have presented a various interest) was never to thicken. Story was moreover now to breathe, at his ease, an air in which the interest of the consummate nude had never been denied. At his ease, I say, though it was not for a year or two that his Roman existence took the form it was so long substantially to keep. There is meanwhile another letter or two from my too-scant store of Lowell's.

*J. R. Lowell to W. W. Story.*

"DRESDEN, *June 7th*, 1856.

"MY DEAR WILLIAM,—You will see by my date that I have got back here to Germany again. The first sheet was written in Sicily, but I found the safety of the post thence very questionable and so kept the letter by me; and, having travelled like a courier ever since, by me it has remained.

"Pray write me here as soon as you arrive in London. I shall be here for a month longer, and then for home. Shall you make any stay in England? Or, if you go straight to Paris, couldn't we make some little excursion thence like that we made in England? I should like of all things to have you come here. Have you seen *our* Saxon Switzerland? It is worth a journey; but write and we'll arrange some plan

or other. I am sensibly better in body and mind than before my journey, only dreadfully bothered by having let my correspondence fall into arrears.

"I must be at home by the 1st September. I have orders. But I hope to be there by the 1st August. *Then* I shall have to work like—a professor on leave. I know no extremer comparison. . . . Rest assured that Messina is duller than Boston. We had to wait a week there for a steamer."

His friends were meanwhile, at receipt of the following, on their way back to Rome.

*J. R. Lowell to Mrs Story.*

"Hôtel de France, Rue Laffitte,
Paris, *July* 16*th*, 1856.

"My dear Emelyn,—Here I am back again just where I was a year ago at this time and as delighted to hear of your being in England as I was then disappointed to find that you had decamped thither—for in England I shall be in a few days. It is rumoured in diplomatic circles that you are at the White Hart, Windsor—which has a very comfortable sound. But are you to stay there? Shall we go and see another cathedral or two together?

"What I wish you particularly to do now is to write and tell me where you got the *doll* which has so excited Mabel's cupidity. If you can't remember the exact address can you tell the street or the quarter? Also whether it is a gal of wax? Moves her eyes? About how big? Cost *environ* how much? Has a wardrobe? I see ruin staring me in the face, and have just got a letter from M. ordering shoes, stockings and what not for the young foreigner. You see what a predicament I should be in were I to go home with the wrong baby. It is not a case for a warming-pan, for the features of the child are already known to the expectant mother by vision — nay by actual touch of the twin sister of elder birth. Not *every* supposititious child would answer. . . . I am already tired of Paris where *ich langweile mich immer fürchterlich.* You think I am suffering from the hyp-complaint? Very well, the result is the same. But I have really been ill, mind and body. Mind is better—body so so.

"So the Longfellows are coming? Won't they have a nice time! Over here it is more of a reputation to *know* Longfellow than to have written various immortal works. Gather your laurels while ye may, old Time is still a-flying! and old times, too, more's the pity. We will

have one more, though, in England, I trust. Since I wrote, I have seen William's Beethoven, which I like extremely, both sentiment and style. It must have been very effective, and is short enough to make one wish for more—a rare merit on such occasions, when poets generally hang all their wardrobes fluttering on the lines. Is W. as savage as ever against that wretched town of Boston? Since George Third nobody ever treated it so. Well, I give it over to him. I entrench myself in Cambridge; it is a good kind of place. For the country in general, with Kansas and Brooks and what not, I don't wonder you were in haste to get out of it. . . ."

Story's face, notably in a preliminary residence or two (before settling at Palazzo Barberini), was now frankly turned to all the pleasantness of the coming years—none the less copious a quantity, to the spectator distant and wistful, for having, even in the golden Roman air, its usual human admixture. The Roman air, for us, insistently pervades and tinges; so that—to make my own confession at least complete—I see no circumstance too trite, no image too slight, to be bathed by it in interest and in beauty. At this rate and with this intensity do we feel our picture glow. Wonderful, at the threshold, the charm

of the tradition, consecrated and classic, the general hospitality and facility of the legend, into which it all falls. As a question of the "artist-life"—happy invention!—how or where could that life have awaked to more charmed a consciousness, have so surrendered itself to an endless easy rhythm? The fact that the conditions had verily, since Claude, never, among the northern invaders, flowered into the grand style made little enough difference when they had begotten we may perhaps not say so many grand substitutes for it, but at least so many happy dreams of it, so many preparations, delusions, consolations, a sense of the sterner realities as sweetened and drugged as if, at the perpetual banquet, it had been some Borgia cup concocted for the strenuous mind. The mind addressed mainly to the great plastic question had, in such an air, to lapse rather easily from the strenuous; it did so, in general, markedly enough, in spite of an Overbeck, of an early Ingres, of other academic phantoms, unless stiffened, as in the case of the Niebuhrs and even of the Ampères, for some effort of the quite heroic sort. The very interesting "Roman Diaries"[1] of Ferdinand Gregorovius, lately published, give, in a highly

[1] Diari Romani, Milano, 1895. I know but the Italian translation.

interesting manner, the measure both of how such an effort might be sustained and how it might find itself on all sides, countermined. Gregorovius had set himself the huge task of writing the history of the City during the Middle Ages, and this boat, on the river of oblivion, he pulled steadily, up-stream, from 1852 to 1874. His journal, even though written but little from the point of view of the "picturesque," represents vividly, for the seeing eye, the degree to which the obsession protected by that much-abused name could constantly work, and at the same time the degree in which it could be kept, so to speak, in its place. A man of this order, a man of rare distinction, managed merely to put his lips to the insidious liquor, tasting but not swallowing, and setting down the cup with a smile all courteous and wary. But the sensitive soul in general drained it, and, for the most part, at first, in innocent delight, without a misgiving or a reserve. Moreover, as most of those who sickened or died of it never knew they were either ill or dead, the feast had never the funeral air, and the guests sat at table to the end. All of which, not to be too cryptic, is but a manner of saying that Rome was, no doubt, during the golden age (wherever we may place the golden age) better,

mainly, in the process than in the proof. The artist hovered there in the interest of concentration—which was so much, in the matter, to the good; but the medium was one, in fact, in which that hard grain was apt richly to dissolve, and the result remained a delightful ambiguity. Concentration ceased, as it were, to be a pill—it became a liquid element in which one could bathe and splash. In such an element, in fine, one could—certainly for a long time—sit up to one's neck, quite as the convinced patient sits in his particular prescription at a German bath. The place was the æsthetic antidote to the ugliness of the rest of the world—that is, of Anglo-Saxondom in especial—and to become intimate with it was the warranted cure for taints unhappily contracted. Assuredly, as far as it went, it was a cure for many things. The faculty for dryness and dreariness peculiar to our race could never be quite the same after.

This was an admirable lesson, and there were plenty of others scarcely less so. It was all right, as might have been said, if you reacted, and Story, fortunately for him, was a man of whom that could always be presumed. Drugged or not with the Borgia cup, he could keep on his feet and move. Nobody in fact moved more, from subject to subject, interest to interest and

relation to relation; so much so, indeed, that for a relation to pass before him, in some example, as possible to any one, was for him immediately to wish to make it possible to himself. He proposed not, certainly, to write the history of Rome, but, besides proposing to give free substance at last to the forms that haunted him, he constantly strained to know, and to prove he knew—knew for himself, for others, on the spot—either the history of Rome or whatever else might be. He did, for years, what he desired—expressed himself with the rewarded pertinacity of the seeker, the finder, of the rare. He sought and found the secret of beauty, of harmony and, so far as these things went, of truth, for himself—as every artist worth his salt finds it; with that good faith which has the odd double property of leading to "success" and of consoling for the want of it. So it was that his worried experiment of somewhat perversely "commencing" sculptor and poet, as used to be said, justified itself in the mixed manner of human undertakings. He was of course various enough and ingenious enough (without which no man is finely interesting), never to have shut his door once for all to the knock of the vagrant *question*; it was, rather, positively his temperament to keep his head at

the window for such of this tribe as might happen to pass. He therefore never failed of any plenitude in feeling—in the fulness of time and on due occasion—that a man always pays, in one way or another, for expatriation, for detachment from his plain primary heritage, and that this tax is levied in an amusing diversity of ways. He had the sharp as well as the soft reactions, and could, in the multiplied years which can be years of disillusion even for the dull, view the sweet æsthetic surrender, the ancient Roman spell, the fine foreshortened past, at any droll angle that the play of his humour might determine. He could suspect, on plenty of evidence, the definite, the homely proof of the pudding—the show, as to *value*, of the general heterogeneous production to which the general charmed life could point. He could suspect it—which was all that was necessary for the prime lucidity—at the same time that he could do it justice and feel how things happen and how the case stood and how, if Boston had never been Rome, so Rome could never be Boston; and also how, in a word, they had all danced to good music and in the noblest ballroom in the world. Which is all, precisely, that we need dream of demonstrating. The ballroom, the music, the dance—they suffice for outsiders

who gather at the windows and flatten their noses on the panes. It is not with any analysed treason in the golden air that we are concerned, nor with the ultimate lesson and the strained moral of consenting absence, of perverse presence —since who knows, in their finality, anything of these? Our picture is not of pondered finalities, but of happy processes, accidents, adventures, a generous acceptance of generous goodly appearances—all sufficient, in their order, unto the day.

The day then (to the eye of the poor flat-nosed spectator) was to draw a blessing, regularly, from those elements that cluster still where, in the course of time, he gathered them together—in the great cool studio, or series of studios, on the high, cleared and reclaimed ground of the quarter known as the Macao, which, though actively and fruitfully occupied by his son,[1] are practically a museum of his own work. Everything that came from his hand is there in some form of duplicate; the place is peopled by the number and variety of his productions; the vivid idea, the expressive image, appeals straight, on every side, from pedestal and table, yet looking back, at the same time, with blank eyes, at all the pleasantness, all the stress and struggle too, of the past. These

[1] His elder son, the distinguished sculptor, Mr Waldo Story.

things sit there now with calm faces and free limbs, but they touch us, all together, as the cold residuum of ardent hours. Taking them, as we may to some extent do, in their order, they testify—certainly for any other artist-mind—to the travail and trouble in which fine things are born; besides seeming to speak, indefinably (and with an eloquence perhaps essential, sooner or later, to any sculptor's studio,) of a lost companionship, a figure missing, among them, as the absent leader is missing in the orchestra or the absent shepherd in the flock. Is it not to such a presence, genial glowing, particularly familiar, in Story's case—signally loveable as the presence of creator for creature—that they must feel they once owed a season of warmth? The effect is doubtless a matter of the golden air again, of all the old enacted but unrecorded æsthetic history with which it is so heavily charged; the travail and the trouble are as if they had never been, and the mere charm of association, of the accidents and accessories, the sense, always at hand, of the poetry of life in such conditions, rules the scene. Is it the poetry of the life that makes the beautiful things, or is it they that—almost as much when less beautiful as when more so—make the poetry of the life? One doesn't ask, and one doesn't care; the poetry of the life fills the view,

so that, even as a mere wistful visitor, one partakes of it and lingers in it. It is in the slight dimness of the high rooms, lighted from above and with a *tone* for all their figures; it is in the space and sunshine of the garden outside, where a vague, easy pressure of business flickers and drops, where odd morsels of marble shine and shade as in their natural light, where happy human adjuncts make labour look like leisure, like luxury, like love, like something independently sweet. A door stands open to a court (there are glimpses, vistas everywhere,) and impressions so multiply that you go to meet them —meet them in the form of workmen of the pleasant race, delightful, one would say, as partakers of one's thought and diviners of one's intention; propitious with their fine hands and mild handsome faces and light hereditary skill and general amenity and practicability. A group is having its dinner in the warm shade of a clump of wind-stirred trees, and a small boy in a paper cap sings as he brings them, across the grassy yard, something savoury in a tin pot. There could be no better centre for the comings and goings of the imaginative *maker*, for the prosecution of mysteries and the entertainment, the invocation, even the very endurance, of moods.

Scarcely less harmonious a home, however, for

such matters, was that admirable Palazzo Barberini in which Story took, in 1856, his final Roman stand, and which was, to the end, the main scene for him of an overflowing personal and social life, a life in which security and intimacy never grew prosaic, in which satisfaction never quenched eagerness, in which curiosity, hospitality and variety never ceased to renew themselves. There are drawbacks of sorts in old Roman palaces, in the employment of which, as a class, our current generations suffer from finding themselves at once not grand enough and too "particular"; but they cover their deficiencies with such a general amplitude, and carry their incongruities with so high a front, that they seem to remind us of the honour they do us by admitting us even to such family secrets as are matters of the back-stairs. In such a house as the great Barberini residence—built by Urban VIII. "out of the quarry of the Colosseum," on the design of Bernini—the type has been so solidly seated that the centuries revolve without wearing it down. The original lucidity of the idea abides, its original insolence, one may almost say, triumphs; it keeps the place, always, as great when you see it again as when you saw it last; it faces you, as so many of the Roman monuments of the first

order do, with the assurance of some great natural fact; and it brings you round, in especial, to the conviction that, taking one thing with another, it may rank as the first of its company. Something in its position on the sharp slope of the Quirinal, half-way down the valley formed by the opposite slope of the Pincian, something in the way it stands reduces perhaps, till you get nearer, its noble scale and mass; but many admirers, for long years, were always getting nearer, either on their way into the left wing, to be sad over the turbaned Cenci, or into the right to climb, more gaily, though a good deal more steeply, Mrs Story's stairs. Then the scale and mass loom nobly, just as the strange, clean old yellow of the porous travertine shows deeper, and you marvel once more, under your impression, at the revolutions of time. It was the name, the race, the power, that, in other days, made the palace; it is the palace that, in our own, has to make, stiffly and ponderously, what it can. But such a general presence even shrinks and straitens with majesty. To the Storys, at all events, the occupancy of a voluminous apartment of the second floor was proposed by a member of the family, whom they had known in Paris during the winter of 1854-55. Don Filippo Barberini had been destined for the

church, but it was not in Paris, I take it, where he afterwards died, that he was preparing himself for any such career. He lived at any rate long enough to see his friends installed in the rambling, many-roomed *suite*—many-windowed, thereby, as well, and with every window a view of something ineffably amiable and Roman—that was still spoken of as "Miladi Coventry's": consecrated to this attribution by the somewhat sinister fact that the personage in question, occupying it some years before, had been stabbed there (whence, naturally, an immense commotion and a proper weird legend,) by a treacherous servant. She had been found, in her blood, on certain steps at the door of one of the rooms, and, having forced the blade of the knife with which the man had attacked her back upon his hand, had herself inflicted a wound by which her assailant was identified.

The legend, however, was not of a nature to be oppressive—there were plenty of others (born from day to day, for that matter, of the perpetual play of picturesqueness, of sun and shade, even of current history and current curiosity, in such a place,) to overlay it. Other Roman palaces have mostly, with their grandeur, their gloom; the only fault of the Barberini is perhaps the large brightness of its face, a note almost

of modern gaiety in its complexion and its open approaches; the note repeated (for happy tenants) in all the heterogeneous pleasantness and poetry of rearward, sideward views—blue, Claude-like distant things and brown, yellow, amusing near ones: iridescent horizons, accidental pictures, unsuspected revelations and possessions, waste Barberini courts, terraces, treasures of space, precious Capuccini gardens, Capuccini bells, Capuccini figures, Capuccini quaintnesses of every sort. With these impressions the place is all invested—or *was*, since what Roman view is not, at some points, now changed?—so that, for the pilgrim of occasions, the right observer of opportunity, they play (or used to) richly into each other, giving to any friendly recurrent relation a touch of the romantic. That sense used to deepen on the admirable great staircase that mounted to where Thorwaldsen's grand lion —"really" grand, I should say, but that here one somehow drops patronage—seems at once so to guard the spot and yet not to bar the way; and it can surely nowhere in Europe reach a finer, clearer maximum than in presence of the picture made, above the couchant beast, by the great confronted doors, surmounted with papal and princely escutcheons, that admit to the *piano nobile*. State and style, nakedly enough,

but with the conscious art of greatness unadorned, express themselves in these dispositions; and nothing was more interesting, as one slowly passed, than to ponder again the old mystery of the strong effect that resides in simplicity and that yet is so far from merely consisting of it. Great lines, great spaces, great emphasis, great reserve — if the grand style abides in them all they yet scarce suffice to make it. And the rest of your way up, a steep straight vista, gave you time to puzzle out, if you could, the essence of the insolent secret. It was all really, with the very swagger of simplicity, a wrought refinement, a matter of the mixture of the elements, a question, like everything else indeed in the whole place, of the mutual relation of parts. It was through such impressions as these that, in Rome, at every turn, you were met by the sharpest reminder of all, that of the old social appearances, old manners, figures, features, the delightful, dreadful old conception of conduct, of life. What the grand style for the few involved in the way of a small style for the many —this and many other ancientries had arts of their own for popping out or becoming vivid. Manners in fact—manners as they *had* been—could, of old, as the first impression of pilgrims with a sense for them, hang upon the very house-

fronts and perch (in the special Roman light into which, of afternoons, high things emerge from narrow streets) on the very cornices. They stood on the steps and at the doors of the churches, they stalked in the great Renaissance naves, lurked in the florid chapels, fairly bloomed in the general smell.

But these are memories, these are openings, that would take us too far; we are concerned, and but for the instant, with one of the openings that yawn majestically on the Barberini staircase. Acceding to fifty high chambers it gives us, this glimpse of a vista, exactly what it should (during the years we go up and down,) as the characteristic image, the concentrated, typical scene: old Cardinal Barberini playing cards every evening with two or three obsequious priests, on the inveterate note, for the conclusion, of the triumph that his Eminence's humility and simplicity have had to accept as the mysterious order of Providence—the intelligent resigned smile of the others when *Sua Eminenza ha vinto!* It was perhaps indeed rather the new manners that were in question when, of an evening, as one approached, from above, the bottom of the wondrous stair and felt the mild breath of the court, one inevitably caught the sound of rain and regretted, with a

momentary vulgarity, the absence of the London cab-whistle. It was always (that is it was often) but the plash of the great fountain, that babble of water from somewhere which is ever the most Roman note of all: as if, precisely, in one of the most bloodstained of cities, fate had provided for it a proportionate washing away. There is plash enough, at any rate, at the Barberini, to cleanse, for the fancy, the threshold on which poor Lady Coventry bled, and even to send up its cheer into the other wing, where generations of tourists, with Hawthorne's beautiful novel in their hand, still fancy they find in the sweet face of Guido's picture the plea of justifiable parricide. The access to the place from the left as you approached was much the more majestic, but I am not sure the possibilities of impression in the opposite quarter were not, in their way, as fine. This latter approach was in any case queerer and quainter, and not least because of the odd dangling cardboard, inscribed as by a conscientious *portiere*, which anciently marked the means of summons for the keeper of the Gallery. The admirable ascent, circular but ample, was in the nature of an inclined plane, and the little doors in the wall, widely interspaced, found their climax, at the top, in the grave entrance to the great Library, acces-

sible to the public but one day in the week, though doubtless more freely opened to the rare special seekers for whose musty errands, in the clear blue air, amid the deep-toned old woodwork, the melancholy leather, the labelled vellum, the antediluvian maps, one had the consciousness of an envy surviving even the chill of awe.

Easier feelings attended another threshold, the lurking door, the door of ghostly tinkles, between the Gallery and the Library, though such feelings, to-day, in truth, encounter difficulties, delicacies, once scarce knows what to call them, vague scruples of statement, just indulgences of memory. As the art-life was led everywhere, so, inevitably, it was led in the adorable little old *rococo* apartment to which our ghostly tinkle would admit us had we time to follow it up. There too American art—that of the landscape in the manner of Claude, the stone-pine, the ruin, the sunset—flourished in its day, having both its noon of glory and its evening of eclipse; but there, above all, "luck," the admired of every comer, could hold, for years, its discreet revel—the luck of a lodging that was a minor masterpiece of early eighteenth-century *tarabiscotage*, of contorted stucchi, mouldings, medallions, reliefs of every form, a small riot of old-world elements. Robert Browning and his wife, at a time when,

in view of Mrs Browning's health, an alternative to their Florentine winter seemed urgent, had been in treaty for this apartment, but the arrangement had failed, and it was to be peopled, for my own eventual recollection, with more troubled spirits. Ghostly enough to-day the career of Story's neighbour Tilton, the American painter of Italian and Egyptian landscape, who had his season of delusive fame, his flush of Turneresque eminence in London, for a year or two, at the Academy, on the "line," and who not unnaturally supposed that, in the well-worn phrase, his fortune was made, whereas it was but to remain, for the long after-period, quite sadly, publicly, permanently unfinished; yet with such compensations of setting, of background, of incident, of imputed, of possible association and experience, a kind of Roman felicity of *in*felicity, in the whole dim little drama. Its dimness gives out—as what old Roman dimness does not?—broken pearly lights to the lingering mind, and I find, at all events, that, for memory, the names, the facts, the misfortunes involved produce no vision of dismal things, but only and insistently an image of the situation lurking, between the Gallery and the Library, on the edge of the old mild ascent; a recall of the charming *rococo* shell of the story, the plaster scroll-work, the

delicacy, the floridity of the little consolations or exasperations, whichever they may have been. For they produce as well the wonder again, after all, of whether troubles may best be borne in plain places which appear to leave the question of happiness out, or amid the ornaments and graces that are supposed to contribute to it. Platitude has been known to irritate not less than pomp, and the question doubtless defies settlement, though it is one that must so often come up for exiles and absentees (it must have come for our friends and too-often uneasy precursors,) in the lovely land of Italy.

Once more, however, such matters are not our note, nor, fortunately, have cause to be: the brave Roman years, in our circle, were the reign not of labour and sorrow, but of labour and pleasure, of application and reaction more happily commingled, surely, than at any other time or in any other place. The fineness of the charm of Rome was exactly in the quality of the amusement; always so associated with something beautiful and great, so interfused with perceptions and impressions, with the character, the accent, the dignity (one scarce knows what to call it) of the medium itself, that it became not a waste, but a positive gain of consciousness, an intensification, at its best moments, of experience.

The Campagna alone, for the satisfaction at once of sense and of soul, for rides (most of all), drives, walks, excursions of whatever sort, feasts *al fresco*, pictures *ad infinitum*, archæology lively or severe—

> "Winged Persuasions and veiled Destinies,
> Splendours, and Glooms, and glimmering Incarnations"—

the Campagna was an education of the taste, a revelation of new sources both of solitary and of social joy. Who shall say that, in the fond artist-life, the line of division ever could, or needed to, be clear between the world of absorption and the world of effusion, or whether as much fortunate work was not done in the one as in the other? Nowhere, in fine, so much as in all these conditions, can it have seemed light to be serious, and serious to be light—and with a wonderful particular levity, or intensity, as one chose to consider it, for every day in the winter. Was there not always a meeting, a junketting, an excursion in order—some church-feast, some curiosity of colour and sound, not to be missed, some new "find" in some admirable scene of excavation, some Cervara *rendezvous* of fraternising artists, costumed, polyglot, theatrical, farcical, delightful; something new finished, reported of, in somebody's, poor fellow's, clever chap's studio; some actor, some young Salvini

worth seeing at the Mausoleum of Augustus; some singer, somewhere else, singing for sixpence an old opera never heard but in Italy; some hospitality, for the evening — the concern of some of the company—offered at a painted and storied palace? The whole matter, at the present hour, is rather phantasmagoric; the artist-life, in the romantic conditions and with the romantic good faith, is a thing of the past; the Campagna, near the walls of Rome, has been for the most part cruelly curtailed and cockney-fied; the hotels, huge and overflowing, the paradise now of the polyglot element, much more copious than of old and more strident, outface the palaces and entertain, gloriously, themselves and each other. But the softer tone lives still, on the spot, in a fond memory here and there, and echoes of the old evenings in especial, of the Roman balls, say, before the days of mourning, even yet fall upon the ear. At these festivities the early evening was quiet and dancing in suspense; nothing was done till the Cardinals had arrived, preceded up the great staircases by the four torches to which they had a right and which preceded them, in a like manner, on their urbane departure. Then, beneath the great lustres that clarified the rich old ceilings, the dancing broke out. The *vice-principi*, as

the major-domos were called, stood behind the princesses, on occasions of multitude, to indicate, when necessary, the identity of arriving guests or other vague persons, with a further hint of the degree of salutation required. There were cases, apparently, in which the degree was high: "*Due reverenze, tre reverenze — reverenza profonda!*" And there is an echo, a very interesting echo, that bravely generalises: "The princes themselves were mostly stupid."

Central and splendid, meanwhile, of course, for any full vision of the artist-life, would be the Villa Medici, that massive, monumental Académie de France which nestles, among dim nymph-haunted groves of its own, at one of the entrances to the public Pincian. The Roman school, the "finishing" school, the grave temple of consecration of the happy young prize-winners—in both the plastic arts, in architecture, in music—of the Beaux Arts in Paris, it would easily engulf our handful of shadows, had it the opportunity, in its fine crepuscular influence. Our good fortune is that, in our retrospect, it but indirectly competes; it was a world in itself, with its own cluster of stars, and doubtless is still, even though the Roman finish may have lost, in an age of impressionism, so much of its credit. It is *we* indeed rather—the barbarians at large—without

our temple and our priest, who didn't compete; the day for this was, in its manner, to come, to come with the creation of an American temple. The art-world was indeed a collection of little worlds of contrasted origin and speech, bands almost as numerous and as separately stamped and coloured as the little promenading "nations" —black, white, red, yellow, purple—of the Propaganda college. They had, conspicuously, their Cervara masquerades and other chances of reciprocity; but the Académie de France represented, with all the genius that had conceived and maintained it, an organised and domiciled life which reduced the other collective existences, æsthetic groups, in comparison, to the level of gipsy encampments. It sat enthroned, in fine, on "State aid"; only, as it was grand, it was also —rather solemnly—amiable, and dispensed hospitalities, carried on dim Sunday evenings (under high *lambris* and attention to delicate music, in the presence of Poussinesque tapestries and an occasional bland great lady), that had all the benevolence of a great example offered. Profiting by the example as (or at least when) I could, I seem to remember to-day that it was all a scene the general artistic conscience was free to feel as central—as attesting, that is, with a stately ceremonial, the beautiful collective faith.

It is possibly because of one's thus thinking of the Villa Medici as the special temple of the worship that one falls into alluding to it as crepuscular and solemn; quite particularly pleasant and profane as was obviously much of the young life lived there. Its great garden of ilex vistas, where statues and busts unfailingly "composed," diffused doubtless a shade and seemed to give the pitch. Everything made for majesty; nothing fell below the academic—neither the fancied nymphs at twilight nor the candle-lit attitudes at the music. The nymphs doubtless, at certain hours, stood more revealed; yet remaining in their degree Poussinesque, draped with some shadow of style, on the smooth canvas and in the caressed clay of the workrooms. It was all, at any rate, noble, harmonious and interesting; it presents its particular ghosts with a perfect art.

A letter of Story's of May 21st, 1857, makes a date definite, though there are still references for us to matters previous to it.

*W. W. Story to Charles Eliot Norton.*

"Rome, *May 21st*, 1857.

. . . "We are off next week to Burnt Sienna, but what will most interest you is that we have almost 'combined' to take the second story of the Palazzo Barberini. The Principe has shown very

good will to have us come, and will put the whole apartment in complete order and let it to us for 250 dols. less than the rent we receive for our little house in Bussey Place. I never saw anything more rambling than the upper rooms above the apartment, which are to be included in our lease. They are legion in number and crop out at every new visit. I should think there are some twenty at least, of every kind and shape, going oddly about, up little stairs, through curious holes, into strange lumber-rooms, and then suddenly opening into large and admirable chambers."

It is with this moment in the life of our friend that I should be glad to connect, did I but enjoy the liberty, a small but charming group of letters in which the interesting shades we interrogate fairly swarm; fairly flitting through them as over the stage — before the soundless orchestra—of a theatre of ghosts. This privilege, however, is denied me, and I must content myself with recording, in the light shed by the documents, a relation and an episode that were evidently alike delightful. Mrs Gaskell, the author of "Cranford," "Sylvia's Lovers," "Wives and Daughters," admirable things which time has consecrated, takes up, from Manchester,

in the autumn of 1856, an acquaintance made, or rather, apparently, renewed, in Paris in 1855. "I like to think of *our* Sunday breakfasts in Paris, and your Sunday bunches of violets, and the dear little girl, and the magnificent baby, and the Italian nurse, and the Etruscan bracelets, and the American fish-rissoles; and then of Mr Story, high and far above all, with his —— Island ghost-story and his puns. Oh, weren't we happy!" She inquires as to the identity of "a very agreeable American Kennedy, whom I met a good deal in London this year, and a very charming Mrs Edward Twisleton and a Miss Dwight, her sister"; at which the faint echoes begin more or less to sound and the dim scene to people itself. The island of the ghost-story eludes us, as does also the very agreeable Kennedy, but we recognise the rosy dawn of the "international" marriage, destined subsequently so to flourish, in the writer's other reference. Images of fair and elegant girls transplanted to English soil, briefly and charmingly blooming there, then early extinguished and long mourned, peep again through the closed window —with clever Boston sisters, eminent and trenchant, and reserved, in their time, for happier fates, but now at last shadows as well, looking at us also, if we like, through the clouded pane. Mrs

Gaskell's letter of 1856 mentions as "the vaguest idea in the world" the possibility of her going to Rome with two of her daughters at the winter's end. "I hope to have finished my Life of Miss Brontë by the end of February, and then I should like to be off and away out of the reach of reviews, which in this case will have a double power to wound, for if they say anything disparaging of *her* I know I shall not have done her and the circumstances in which she was placed justice; that is to say that in her case more visibly than in most her circumstances made her faults, while her virtues were her own." The Storys passed the winter of 1856-57 at 43 Via Sant' Isidoro, and it was in the spring of the latter year that this correspondent carried out her plan of a couple of months spent near them and under their immediate wing—a season the perfect felicity of which was to feed all her later time with fond memories, with renewed regrets and dreams. Mrs Gaskell had clearly, in an eminent degree, the sentiment of appreciation (*as* a sentiment); reading her letters suggests, singularly, the charm of such a relation with her as would spring from having had occasion to contribute to her pleasure, her rest, her relief. Clear echoes of a "good time" (as we have lived on to call it) break out in her full,

close page; making us ask ourselves what could have been more delightful, in those days, than to be in any degree able to see that she had it.

"I want just, if I can," she again wrote, "to leave England on the day of publication of my book: this will be, I expect, one day in the first half of February; and I believe it will take us eight days to reach Rome—somewhere about Feb. 20th at the earliest. It might even be a fortnight later. I have still 200 pages to write, but they begin to print to-morrow. I shall bring you a copy with me, if it is out, in memory of our happy Paris Sundays. I think you'll be interested in it—I am so much so." But there was, however, inevitably, a delay in her starting, and she writes again, undatedly, but apparently in March: "I must first of all thank you for all the kind help you have given us, and then accept most gladly your charming invitation to spend our first few days with you while we choose our lodgings and get a little initiated into Roman ways." To the happy conditions of the pilgrimage when it at last took place we have her testimony, from the "cold dim grey Manchester," in the following September. "It was in those charming Roman days that my life, at any rate, culminated. I shall never be so happy again. I don't think I was ever so happy

before. My eyes fill with tears when I think of those days, and it is the same with all of us. They were the tip-top point of our lives. The girls may see happier ones—I never shall." She read all poetry into almost any friendship, and she now looked back at the Roman felicity across an interval that had bristled with disagreeable things. She had gone forth in the joy of having finished her vivid Biography, but the book, though in the highest degree "successful," had sown her, at the same time, a crop of dragon's teeth (the effect of an apparent mistake of fact as to the history of Bramwell Brontë,) which had bravely to be gathered in. Of this unpleasant business she gives a full and interesting account, which is not, however, unfortunately, to our present purpose; besides which some of us still remember the nine days' flurry, which was to attach a "fancy" value to the first edition of the book. What it had, at any rate, especially done was to embitter the aftertaste of the pleasure she had taken, in Rome, with so good a conscience. Still, the aftertaste was to recur irrepressibly. "Oh, I so long for Italy and Albano that it makes me ill!" she sighs in another letter, apparently of 1858; in which her first allusion is to the removal of her friends to Palazzo Barberini. "I am glad Domenico is with you. It is bad enough

your having changed your house; I don't like to think of your changing a single servant. Have you still Serafino? Our remembrances to Luigi and Clarke. Speak of us to Amante and Domenico. Have you still little birds for dinner, and the good 'dolci,' the creams of which it was necessary to be forewarned, lest we should eat too much previously?" Writing at another time that she has been for a while at Whitby, whither she had gone for impressions preparatory to "Sylvia's Lovers," she mentions that Hawthorne was at the same time, on the same coast, at Redcar, ten miles off, engaged in finishing "Transformation," the subject of which she sketches as she has heard it narrated. Then touching on that outbreak of the faun nature, the animal, in the strange hero, which moves him at a given moment to the commission of a murder: "For all of which, somehow, you like Donatello the better!"

For all of which—that is for all, from her hand, that I have before me—we like *her*, Mrs Gaskell, so much the better that we would fain keep her present with us as long as we may, as long as we feel her spirit, over all Roman matters, willing to linger. We must let it go, however, on a couple of the inevitable notes of home-sickness. "I think Rome grows almost

more vivid in recollection as the time recedes. Only the other night I dreamed of a breakfast—not a past breakfast, but some mysterious breakfast which neither had been nor, alas! would be—in the Via Sant' Isidoro dining-room, with the amber sunlight streaming on the gold-grey Roman roofs and the Sabine hills on one side and the Vatican on the other. I sometimes think," she goes on, "that I would almost rather never have been there than have this ache of yearning for the great witch who sits with you upon her seven hills." After Hawthorne's romance has come out she expresses to her friends her supposition that they will have read, as every one in England had, the "Cleopatra chapter," and assures them that she is proud of being able to say to people that she had been acquainted from the first with the statue commemorated. "I feel funnily like Quin, who, when George III. made his first speech before Parliament after his accession, said, 'I taught the boy to read!'—for I come in crowing over my having seen the thing even in the clay and describing more fully what every one is asking about. I can't say, unluckily, 'I taught the boy to imagine beauty.'" And in relation to a collection of tales, promised to her publishers, but with which, for the time, she is disinclined to proceed—"I could *tell* the

stories quite easily. How I should like to do it to you and Mr Story and Edith, sitting over a wood-fire and knowing that the Vatican was in sight of the windows behind! . . . You don't know how a scrap of paper from Rome is valued in this house." And then at the last: "Please don't forget you have my 'Tolla' with you somewhere—left to be bound in the pretty Roman vellum binding. But if it is lost never mind it; only if you come upon an old shabby copy remember it is mine. I am very loth to shut up this letter—it somehow seems like closing up Rome for ever." Which allusion I strain my licence to quote for old acquaintance' sake—because of the impossibility of not vibrating a little at a touch of reference (for rare to-day *is* reference) to Edmond About's first, and truly beautiful, little novel; a masterpiece of the pathetic, as we used at least to think it, just as we used to think several of its successors masterpieces of the ironic and the comic. Strange often indeed are the fates of little books—and stranger still sometimes the fates of little authors.

I remember how, during the first walk I ever took in Rome, "Tolla," though even then of respectable antiquity, seemed so recent and fresh to me that I was half the time occupied in

wondering which of the palaces had stood for the Palais Feraldi—in which of them the exquisite Tolla had lived, loved, wasted, died; the palaces really having, as it struck me under that violent and irreproducible impression, more to say about everything Roman than any other class of object. And I was already wondering why About's tragic tale, read in extreme youth as a permitted, a quite encouraged specimen of French "grown-up" fiction, had ceased to be a work frequently mentioned, had not in fact become a classic of the same order as "Manon Lescaut" or the history of Paul and Virginia. I might indeed have found an answer to my question in a re-perusal of the book; which, none the less, I have never to this day—and quite also for old acquaintance' sake—read over. That has left me free to think as tenderly of it as I like—and of the far-off hour of young sensibility, of young subjection; as fondly and musingly as may be of these innocent things and others besides: the odd, abrupt extinction of the writer's bright star in the eclipse of the second Empire; the warning, lesson, morality, conveyed in so sharp a turn of the wheel, so fickle a fortune; the ferocities of fate that such transitions represent; the question of who is to

be sure, if About could not have been; the fact, above all, that a great literature may be thought of as rich indeed when it can afford to sacrifice, as one may say, not consciously and publicly to *wear*, so clear a talent. All of which remarks may possibly figure a pyramid resting on its point. The point of my pyramid is that the little old Roman love-story, Mrs Gaskell's and mine, was a thing to be cherished—as it was, most peculiarly and insistently, a thing to be bound in the little old parchment and gilt. Was it, *is* it, a small full-blown flower of the story-teller's art?—does any one in the world to-day really know? But to find out, I remind myself, is possibly to expose to danger the most delicate literary grievance of one's collection. One's collection is precious, the haunted chamber, the innermost temple, of Taste, the air tonic beyond any other for that principle. Therefore let us bind in ivory vellum the slim idyl of our fourteenth year, and let us keep it always on some shelf of good credit. But let us decidedly never open it again—referring, of course, when I say "again," to the antediluvian few. The many who are now fourteen have enough with the late Mr Henty, a classic whom our own literature will *not* sacrifice.

These things we might well take, had we margin for it, as stirring up for us another mute company. It is hard indeed—as with a positive heartlessness—to pass over names into which one would fain for the moment read, or at least write, some of the pleasant meaning they have to give. Hamilton Wild, whom we have already amicably encountered, had left Rome with Mrs Gaskell and her daughters, on their departure, and befriended them, in complications, by the way; they having desired to put in, on the road to Florence, the vision of Siena—which offered some difficulty on which they had not counted. Mild enough and dim enough are such adventures after such intervals, but consorting so with the remembered figure, the character, charm, talent, production, of the man of many friends, who painted, who talked, who travelled, who in particular endeared himself, and on whom also rests something of the soft light of the old Arcadia. Where are his pictures now? They were not vulgarly numerous, and to ask the question, for that matter, is immediately to feel sure that they must have incurred the happy fortune of that special shade of indulgence which is spoken of as "friendly keeping." He painted them very much for himself, and it is logical

that for himself—that is for his memory—they should be kept. But have they not the further felicity that when, at this time of day, they are shown for *him*, for the so amiable man, they strike, they surprise, a little, on their own account, produce the brief, belated, benevolent "Really?" which, as an eventual crown of glory, is the best that most of us may hope for? I recall Hamilton Wild, at all events, as, with two or three others—with T. G. Appleton, with Arthur Dexter, the "mio amico Arturo" of the dedication of Story's "Grafitti d'Italia"—of the small, select company of the bachelors of Boston, a group so almost romantic in their rarity that their "note" would suggest, their title verily adorn, a light modern opera. I fail, at all events, to resist the disposition to commemorate him to the extent of a short note addressed by him from the heart of Arcadia and which has strayed into my collection, though belonging to it only through reference. It has indeed more than on reference, and another haunting shade, an Arcadian of the Arcadians, slips from it into our path. I can scarce express the regret, or the gentleness, with which I brush by this latter apparition.

"They [the Storys] start for somewhere near

Siena on Monday, and wish me to go in their carriage. Mrs Tappan and suite go on the same day to Florence by Perugia, and she has likewise invited me; and as I have never seen that route I am strongly tempted to go with her. Wouldn't you? I have finished my pictures for 'Belmont,' as you may suppose. Rome is now most lovely, all full summer splendour; every wall covered with roses, and the Campagna like a great garden as you look over it from the Cæsars' Palace. We have had a succession of hot days lately, and one crept into the shade as one walked in the city. People sit out of doors in the evening, and all Rome goes quietly to sleep at mezzogiorno. Shops are shut, blinds closed, and all take a snooze; you hear only the cry of the lemonade-vendor, with his basket daintily lined with cool green leaves over which nods a bunch of roses, as he bawls 'Aqua freschis-s-sima! Limo-o-o-one!' I haven't told you what a jolly time we had in the Abruzzi; it was really splendid."

There would be other scents to follow; but there are luckily, in the interest of concentration, deterrents. The eminently social (as well as the eminently individual) figure of Mme. Mohl, with its high antiquity and its supreme oddity, would

be a signal instance, for she looks out at me, characteristically, from one of Mrs Gaskell's letters. But this remarkable shade has enjoyed, copiously, the honours of commemoration—walks in fact with a public effect with which no light touch of private testimony can hope to compete. In spite of which, I may add, I shall not resist the opportunity of reproducing a brief entry of Mrs Story's inspired by her in the course of some notes on the Parisian winter of 1853-54. What a fortune indeed, I may here boldly parenthesize, would have assuredly awaited any chronicler able to produce her image, by the light of knowledge, quite intact and as a free gratuity to his readers; produce it in its habit as it lived, in its tone as it talked, with its rich cluster of associations, and above all with the mystery of the reasons of its eminence—a mystery admirable, almost august, from long duration, and enhanced by the complete absence, at any moment, of any weak attempt on the lady's part to clear it up. Mrs Story had however, in a manner, her explanations. "Mme. Mohl used to drop out of an omnibus, often into a mud-puddle, at our door, and delight us with her originality and freshness. I can see her now, just arrived, her feet on the fender before the fire, her hair flying,

and her general untidiness so marked as to be picturesque—since she showed a supreme indifference to the details of dress. Her talk was all her own; nobody was like her for a jumble of ideas and facts, which made her mind much like her clothes, topsy-turvily worn. If she came to urge me to go to the theatre or a concert with her it was after her own fashion; she elbowed her way through the crowd with wonderful success, and enjoyed the plays, from some *balcon* or *fauteuil* that she had wrested from the box-office, in complete indifference to her surroundings. She cared for nothing but what she was hearing or seeing, and her racy comments were always worth remembering. Her little dinners were amusing beyond any others, thanks to the quantities of clever talk. She was always at home on Friday evenings, which were occasions we so liked that we never, when in Paris, omitted one, and in fact often timed our arrival or put off our departure not to miss them. She knew how to manage her clever people—it was what she was most remarkable for, putting them always on their strong points and effacing herself except for appreciation."

In addition to a more meagre note on Alexis de Tocqueville ("He often in 1854 came to

breakfast with us on Sundays; the most charming of men; sensitive and fastidious, full of accomplishment, spirit, grace of mind,") I find in the same little cluster of memoranda an affectionate reference to Thackeray, written apparently in some later year, but connected with the same winter. She says, after noting that he had been at this time a frequent visitor: "I took Annie[1] to her first ball at the Hôtel de Ville, and his interest in her dress, appearance and enjoyment was delightful to see. He sat up for her, to have the details of the evening before she had lost her fresh impression, and enjoyed to the full her enthusiasm over the splendours we had seen. He often looked in upon us during his afternoon walk, talked with Edith as she liked, and looked with her over the wardrobe, counted even the rows of socks, of *mon petit frère*, in whom he took great interest. The next winter he was with us in Boston, and dined with us, in Rowe Street I remember, on Waldo's first birthday, calling him 'Henry the Eighth' and tipping him with his first sovereign." And she goes back to the sad winter in Rome, the time of the death of her eldest son, when "we often urged him to forget us and not to be drawn

[1] Mrs Richmond Ritchie.

down into the depths of our sorrow, but rather to disport himself in the cordial sunshine of appreciation, among his own people, to which he had so good a right. But he would not hear of this, and came again and again, listening to our tale of grief as if it had happened to himself, with a kindness and sympathy never to be forgotten. Once he surprised me when I had in my hand a little worn shoe which had for me an intense association; he shed tears over it with me and understood what it meant to me as few could have done. . . . Under what people called his cynical exterior and manner, his was the kindest and truest heart that ever beat, large in its sympathies and gracious in its giving. I think he must have liked us—we liked *him* so much and took such endless pleasure in his society. When alone with us he talked abundantly, but when people were numerous he seemed to have little to say."

Had I been able to make further use of Mrs Gaskell's letters I should have sought a connecting link in saying that the few of Mrs Browning's that I have before me might well, in their perfect amenity, keep them company; all the more that my scant handful of brief notes from the latter source refers itself ob-

viously to the same general season. The first alone perhaps is of slightly earlier origin.

*Mrs Browning to Mrs Story.*

[*Winter of* 1853-54.]

"When Pen, fresh from your kindnesses and his happy day yesterday, brought me, my dear Mrs Story, this too beautiful gift from you, I felt for a moment embarrassed; but it is better, I think, to tell you at once that a brooch *identically the same* has been already given to me and accepted. What am I to do? I can't wear two brooches exactly alike, can I? Perhaps you will set us down as ungracious about gifts, and it is true that the sincere clasp of hands (which you spoke of in an answered note) is better to us than the best gifts. But my reason for begging you to appropriate otherwise this lovely trinket is *too* reasonable to run the least risk of being untenderly interpreted, or, what would be worse, of vexing you. So I take heart to entreat you to fasten it into dear Edith's collar and to let her feel that it is not spoilt by having just passed through my hands. The sentiment of the Christian symbol, so significant and touching to us all, remains with me, while the innocent unconscious Dove, floating whitely

in its atmosphere of rose, suits indeed her years rather than mine. I thank you much, and I shall thank you more if you understand kindly, which you will, I think.

"We count on you to-night, and would fain be exacting for to-morrow night also if we thought that Mr and Mrs M. might draw you. Believe that among the warmest wishes of your truest friends at this season of wishes, there is none, &c., &c."

Two others are of trivial occasions, but there is scarce a scrap of a letter of Mrs Browning's in which a nameless intellectual, if it be not rather a moral, grace—a vibration never suggesting "manner," as often in her verse—does not make itself felt. She writes, apparently in 1860, to the little girl whom she had taken care of in illness several years before—"by Pen's desire. He is not well, and prays you to send him for solace a certain 'Family Robinson,' says he, 'by Mayne Reid,' and to be sure not to remember against him his having 'blotted a book of yours last year.' I doubt the connection between Mayne Reid and Robinson, but speak as I am bidden. Poor child, he wants a book of some kind." And on another occasion she addresses the same young friend in the same interest: "Dearest Edith,

I am very sorry, but papas are more particular than mamas, and this papa of Pen's wants him for his music, he says, and does not like the whole day to be idled. There are lessons, besides, for to-morrow. Dearest Edith, forgive us. Another day, with less obstacles, you see. And thank you for your goodness." It is impossible to disappoint a little girl more mercifully.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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